

March 2. 1671.

**I**T is Ordered by the Lords of His  
Majesties most Honourable Privy  
Council, that none shall Re-print  
or Import this Book of Mr. *Andrew*  
*Graves*, entituled, *The Mystery*  
*Faith*, nor any other of his Sermons  
for the space of eleven years to come  
without the Licence of the Printers  
hereof.

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THE  
Mystery of FAITH

Opened up:

Or some SERMONS

concerning Faith (two where-  
of were not formerly Printed)

Wherein the Nature, Excel-  
lency, and Usefulness of that  
noble Grace is much cleared,  
and the practice thereof most  
powerfully pressed.

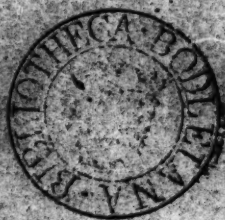
Wherunto are added other three  
Sermons, two concerning the Great  
Salvation, (one of these not for-  
merly Printed) and a third con-  
cerning Death.

By Mr. ANDREW GRAY, late  
Minister of the Gospel in Glasgow.

All these Sermons being now carefully Re-  
vised, and much Corrected.

Job. 3. 18. *He that believeth not, shall be damned  
already, because he hath not believed in the  
Name of the only begotten Son of God.*

Glasgow, Printed by George Thomson,  
Printer to the City, and are to be sold by the  
by David French and Thomas Brown, and  
at most Book-sellers Shops, 1771.





## To the Reader.

needs justify Corazin and Bethsaida, or Sodom and Gomorrah, in that day when every man shall give account of himself to God. And amongst the many preaching witnesses that (alas we are afraid) shall compare in that day against many yet living in their pleasures, and dead while they live: The now glorified Author cannot but be one, whose testimony must be very condemning, especially to the vain, loose, negligent and time-wasting youth in this age: For when he was first drawn to the Ministry, he was but a youth indeed, scarce twenty years compleat, far within that age, that by the constitutions of this Church (except in case of more then common abilities, which indeed he had) is required for entering to that great and holy Calling: And for the Space of two years after (which was all the time that the Church enjoyed his Labour) he was helped to presse Truths and Exhortations of God so home upon the Consciences of his hearers, that as it was observed of him, by one of his most learned and pious Colleagues Master Durham, (who is now in glory with him) he did many times cause the hair of their heads to stand up; The Lord not only hereby verifying his Word, that he can make the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and out of the mouth of Babes can perfect his own praise, but designing also (as would seem of purpose) to send a Ray out of the School for a reproof of the sluggishness of his People, that thereby the aged might be the more ashamed, and the younger more afraid: Neither do we think that this was all, but truly when we consider what measure of Graces, Gifts and Experiences the Lord did bestow upon so young a person, and then with what humility, self-denial, gravity, prudence, diligence, authority and moderation he was helped to manage these Talents during that short time of his Ministry; It may be justly conceived that the Lord brought him forth to be a great con-  
victor

## To the Reader.

million even of us in the Ministry, who came into  
our Masters vineyard long before him, and will go out  
behind him: And indeed to us it looked somewhat  
like the Lords taking up of the little Child, and  
setting him amongst the midst of his contending Dis-  
ciples in these times, that even they who would be  
greatest amongst us, might be least, and see somewhat  
of their own weaknesse.

As to this little Pece, whatever ye shall finde in  
it, it hath this to say for it self, that where as many  
Writings in the World do intrude themselves upon  
the Presse, yet this the Presse hath violently thrust  
into the world: For some young Student, from his  
good affection to the edification of the Lords people,  
and (no doubt) from his high esteem of the precious  
Author his memory, having given in to the Presse a  
Copy of some of those Sermons, being only Notes taken  
from his mouth when he preached them, no sooner were  
they seen abroad, but all the Presses in the Nation fell  
a labouring about them, so that (if we mistake not)  
in lesse nor two or three months time, three or four  
Impressions were cast off, yet all of them so imperfect  
and maimed, that humbled the excellency of the mat-  
ter, and the fresh remembrance of the worthy Author  
his name, made them very sweet to many (especially  
those who had heard him preach) yet the unsuitableness  
wherein they appeared, and their unfitness for  
the first Writers (they being hardly able to take up  
every thing as it was spoken) occasioning divers ma-  
terial failings in the sense, besides lesser faults could  
not but be a trouble to those who were acquainted not  
only with the singular graces, but with also of that  
 eminent Youth. This gave occasion to some friends  
to speak a little what way these preachers, which  
with the Truth and the Authors name ought by au-  
thority by these uncorrect Impressions, might be taken.  
And finding that the Copy, which by providence  
a worthy young Gentleman who was his wife had

## To the Reader.

lying by her, though it was but Notes taken from his mouth, yet was the most correct that could be found. And that it also did contain the whole purposes that he had preached upon these Texts: yea, the whole purposes concerning Faith, that he had preached according to that method, proposed in the first of the Sermons formerly published. This was undertaken to be revised by some, who albeit none of the fittest for these employments yet rather or nothing should be done in the businesse, were content to bestow some hours upon it, according as other necessary employments would permit. And now having sought out all the Notes of these Sermons which we could find from other hands, and compared them with the Copy abovementioned, we do again present them unto the Lords People, not with any confidence that our pains hath put any new lustre upon them; only we have some hopes, that the whole subject being now before them, and these things in the way of expression helped, which either might seem to be somewhat unpleasant, or lyable to mistakes, they shall not now be lesse edifying, nor lesse acceptable then formerly they were. We did not think fit to make any considerable alterations as to the method or other things of that kind, lest haply by straining his excellent purposes too much, to shape them to the ordinary Rules, or to reduce them to that order which might best have pleased our selves, we should have wronged the matter it self, at least, have put these to a losse who did hear him preach, and it may be now upon their reading things in that same order as they heard them, will be the more readily brought under the impressions of that liveliness, power and weight which (it may be) formerly they felt upon their hearts when he was speaking.

If the method do not altogether satisfie some spirits, or the explication seem not so full, or if they find some introductions which possibly lead not in so close, or seem not so fit to the subject of the Sermon, or have

## To the Reader.

now and then there be some little digressions from the main purpose, we shall desire that this may not be construed to be the Authors ignorance of Rules and Method, or his want of abilities in humane Learning; it being known to these who were best acquainted with him, that he had indeed a Scholastick spirit, and was intending far beyond his age and opportunities for studying. But as to all these, we shall intreat you rather to consider, 1. His age, and that his gift was but in the very moulding and breaking (as the speech is in the point of order and method, when the Lord was pleased to call him home from his work. 2. That every man hath his proper gift of God, who in his great wisdom (and certainly for the good of His Church) doth so order, that there is somewhat singular and peculiar almost in every mans way, as to these things. 3. For any thing we know, he had never that high esteem of this, or any other of his labours, as to design any of them for publick use; and these are but Notes taken from his mouth. 4. We are persuaded he studied more his hearers than himself. We will easily perceive, when ye have but read a little, that he hath been a man of a very zealous temper, and that the great bent of his spirit, and that which he did wholly spend himself about, was to make people know their dangerous condition by nature, and by all means to persuade them to believe, and lay hold upon the great Salvation: And truly that a man in such a frame should less attend to these lesser things, is not to be wondered at. And indeed, though these things be good in themselves, and worthy to be looked on in their own place, yet for a Minister of the Gospel, in all Auditories, and upon all occasions, to give up every purpose to such a method, and insist in such a measure of Explications and Criticisms upon words, is but to fatter himself, and to starve his people. Consider the dullness of the most part of hearers in his age, and how hard a thing it is to awake a sleep-



# To the Reader.

ing world; and to get them but to think that it dash  
 censure them to hear in earnest; and possibly it was  
 not a small piece of spiritual wisdom in him (and it  
 may be not unfit to be imitated by others) to begin or  
 end all his Sermons with an awakening word con-  
 cerning Heaven, or Hell, or Judgement, and the dan-  
 ger of choosing the evil, and refusing the good. 6: For  
 digressions, the truth is, that his soul was so filled  
 with such longings after Heaven, and Glory, and so  
 inflamed with the love of Christ, (especially towards  
 the latter end of his race) that when he fell upon these  
 subjects, upon which (ye will see) most of these digres-  
 sions are, he could not well contain himself, nor easily  
 bring off his own spirit. And being not unusual to the  
 Saints in Scripture. And howbeit such things might  
 seem somewhat singular (in the time) and not so com-  
 mon; yet now we have grounds to apprehend that  
 they were often strong influences of the Lords Spirit  
 stirring up a lamp (as it were) into a sudden blaze  
 that was not to burn long in his Church. But now we  
 shall detain you no longer, only this we may assure you  
 of, That although these Sermons are neither so exact  
 nor so full as doubtless they would have been, if they  
 had come from the Authors own pen yet as we dare say  
 they were studied with Prayer, preached with Power  
 and backed with Success; so also, if ye shall read  
 them with Consideration, meditate with Prayer, and  
 practise with Diligence ye shall neither find your time  
 nor pains ill bestowed, but shall have cause to bless  
 the Lord for this amongst other helps that he hath given  
 you for making you meet for the inheritance of the  
 Saints in light. That it may be blessed to this end, is  
 the earnest desire and prayer of your servants in the  
 work of the Lord.

Ro. Trail

Jo. Scilling

# The Mystery of Faith Opened up.

## S E R M O N I.

*Joh: 3. 23. This is his Commandment  
that ye should believe on the Name of his  
Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

**T**His everlasting Gospel (in which  
there are drawn so many precious  
draughts and divine liniments of  
the transcendent beauty of a crucified  
Saviour, and of the riches of his un-  
searchable grace) is a most precious  
and excellent thing, not onely because it doth con-  
tain most absolute and sublime precepts and com-  
mands, in the exercise and obedience of which we  
may not only attain unto the highest pitch of holiness,  
but likewise, because it containeth most rich and pre-  
cious promises, in the possession and fruition of  
which we are advanced to the highest pinnacle of eter-  
nal blessedness, this is clear in the grace of Faith,  
for what doth more purifie the heart, and stamp it  
with the Image of the invisible God then this grace  
of Faith? And what richer promises are annexed  
to this duty, then to this duty of believing, in our  
eternal life, and fruition of God. So that if we  
tarry fourty dayes at the foot of Mount Sinai,

## *The Mystery of Faith*

and had been under the greatest discovering and condemning power of the Law, we may yet come with boldness to mount Sion, and there imbrace Jesus Christ, who is the *end of the Law for righteousness to such as believe*; Upon which Mount he standeth holding forth the golden Scepter of his peace, desiring us to imbrace him, and is crying out that word in *Isa. 65. 1. Behold me, behold me*. O may we not summond Angels, and these twenty four Elders about the Throne, to help us to wonder, that ever such a command as this came forth, that we should believe on the Name of the Son of God, after that we had broken that first and primitive command, *That we should not eat of the forbidden tree*: Was not this indeed to make mercy rejoyce over judgement? And O may we not wonder at the precious oath of the everlasting Covenant, whereby he hath sworn, *That he delighteth not in the death of sinners*? What (suppose ye) were poor *Adams* thoughts when at first the Doctrine of Free-grace, and of a crucified Christ Jesus a Saviour, was preached unto him in Paradise? What a divine surprisal was this, that heaven should have preached peace to earth, after that earth had proclaimed war against heaven? Was not this a low step of condescendency? to behold an offended God preaching peace and good will to a guilty sinner; What could self-destroying *Adam* think of these morning and first discoveries of this everlasting Covenant? Christ, as it were, in the morning of time giving vent to that infinite love which was resting in his bosome and precious heart before the foundation of the world was laid. We know not whether the infiniteness of his love, the secrecy of his love, or the freedom of it, maketh it the greatest wonder; But sure, these three joyed together, make up a matchless and everlasting wonder.

Wou

Would any of you ask the Question, What is Christ worth? We could give no answer so suitable as this; it is above all the Arithmetick of all the Angels in heaven, and all the men on earth, to calculate his worth, all men here must be put to a divine account; This was *Jobs* divinity, *Job* 42. 11. *Men know not the price of wisdom.* And must not Jesus Christ who is the precious object of Faith, and wisdom to the Father, be a supereminent and excellent One, who hath that Name of *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, not onely ingraven on his vesture, (which pointeth out the conspicuousness of his Majesty) but even also upon his thigh, to point out that in all his goings and motions, he preteth himself to be higher then the Kings of the earth? And howbeit the naked proposing of the object doth not convert, yet if once our souls were admitted to behold such a sight as Christ in his Beauty and Majesty, and to be satisfied with the divine rayes of his transcendent glory, then certainly we should finde a blessed necessity laid upon us, of closing with him; for Christ hath a sword proceeding out of his precious mouth, by which he doth subject and subjugate his own to himself, as well as he hath a sword girded upon his thigh, by which he judgeth and maketh war with his enemies. We confesse it is not only hard, but simply impossible to commit a Hyperbole in commending of him; His worth being infinite, and above our expressions, and our expressions being so far beneath his worth, therefore we shall be put to propose that desire unto him, *Exalt thyself O Lord above the Heavens.*

But now to our purpose, being at this time to begin our discourse upon that radical and precious grace of Faith, we intend to speak of it under this unfold notion and consideration: *Faith, We shall*

## *The Mystery of Faith*

Speak of it as it is justifying, or as it doth lay hold upon the righteousness of a crucified Saviour, making application of the precious promises in the Covenant of free grace, which we call justifying Faith. And in the second place, we shall speak a little unto Faith, as it doth lay hold upon Christs strength, for advancing the work of mortification, and doth discover the personal excellencies of Jesus Christ, by which we advance in the work of holiness and divine conformity with God, which we call sanctifying Faith. However, it is not to be supposed, that these are different habits of Faith, but different acts flowing from the same saving habit, laying hold and exercising themselves upon Christ in different respects, and for diverse ends. Now to speak upon the first, we have made choice of these words. The Apostle John, in the former verse, hath been pointing out the precious advantages of the grace of obedience, and of keeping of his commands; that such a one hath, as it were, an arbitrary power with God, and doth receive many precious returns of prayer: As likewise, that one who is exercised in the grace of repentance, is Gods delight, which is included in this, that he doth these things that are well pleasing in his sight. And now in these words he doth ~~as~~ were, answer an objection that might be proposed, about the impossibility of attaining these precious advantages, seeing his commands were so large, and that hardly could they be remembered. This he doth sweetly answer, by setting down in this one verse a short compend or breviary both of Law and Gospel, viz. That we should love one another, which is the compend of the Law: and That we should believe on the Name of His Son, which is the compend of the Gospel; And by this he sheweth the Christian, that there are not many things required of him, for attaining these excellent advantages.

but if he exercise himself in the obedience of  
 these two comprehensive commandments, he shall find  
 favour both with God and man. And as concerning  
 this precious grace of Faith, We have, 1. the advan-  
 tages of it implied in the words, and clear also from  
 the scope, as (no doubt) all the commands have  
 infinit advantages infolded in their holome, which  
 redounds to a Believer, by his practising of them.  
 And, 2. the excellency of it holden forth in the words,  
 in that it is called, *His command*, as if he had no  
 other command but this. (And the Greek particle  
 is here prefixed, which hath a great deal of emphasis  
 and force in it, *Kai autō isynagagōn autō*). But  
 3. There is this also, the absolute necessity of this  
 grace, holden forth here in this word, *His Command-  
 ment*, as if he would have said, by proposing of this  
 command, I do set life and death before you, and that  
 ye would not conceive that it is an arbitrary and arbi-  
 trary thing for you to believe, or not. But he  
 perswaded of this, that as all infinite advantages may  
 constrain you to the obedience of it, so absolute ne-  
 cessity must perswade you to act that which is at your  
 everlasting concernment. And lastly, We have the  
 precious Object upon which Faith (which is justifi-  
 cation) doth exercise it self, and that is upon the  
 Name of the Son of God. And (no doubt) Faith  
 is that excellent grace, which doth elevate the soul  
 unto a sweet and inseparable union with Christ, and  
 is that golden and precious knot, that doth eternally  
 knit the hearts of these precious friends together.  
 Faith is that grace that draweth the first draughts of  
 Christ's precious Image on our hearts, and by love  
 doth accomplish and persevere them. Now, Faith doth  
 hold not only on the faithfulness of God, that  
 he is a God of truth, and that in him there is no lie,  
 but likewise it taketh hold on the omnipotency of  
 God,



## The Mystery of Faith

God, that he is our to whom nothing is too hard  
and infinite infinite mercy and love of God, that  
is one who doth delight to magnifie this Attribute  
above all his works: And these are the three great  
pillars of justifying Faith. From the first, it an-  
swereth all these objections of sense, which do ordi-  
narily cry forth, *Doth he promise faith for evermore?*  
And that with this one word, *If he hath once purposed  
it, he will also do it,* and if he hath once spoken it,  
*he will also make it come to passe.* From the second,  
answereth all these objections that may arise from carnal  
reason and probability, which tend to the weak-  
ning of his confidence: And these do oftentimes cry  
out, *How can these things be?* But Faith laying hold  
upon the omnipotency of God, *is staggered not at the  
promise,* but is strong in the Faith, giving glory to  
God. And it is the noble and divine exercise of this  
Hemick grace of Faith, that these objections of rea-  
son and probability, which it cannot answer, it will  
lay them aside, and yet close with the promise. Which  
was the practice of believing *Abraham*, who consid-  
ered not his own body being weak, nor the barren-  
nesse of *Sarahs* womb. As likewise, it was the com-  
mendable practice of that woman, *Matth. 15.* who  
not being able to answer the second trial of her faith  
from reason, yet notwithstanding, Faith made her  
cry out, *Have mercy upon me, O Son of David.* And  
from the last, a Christian doth answer all the argu-  
ments of misbelief, which do arise from the convictions  
of our unworthinesse and sinfulness, which  
makes us oftentimes imbrace that divinity of *Peter*  
*Luk. 9. 8.* *Departs from me, for I am a sinful man.*  
But Faith taking hold on the infinite mercy and love  
of Christ, it answereth all with this, He walks  
with us according to that rule of merit, but according  
to that precious and golden rule of love and bound-  
lesse compassion.



But before we shall speak any thing unto you of these things, wee would a little point out some few things to be known as previous to those: we shall not dwell long in pointing out the nature of justifying Faith, it is that grace whereby a Christian being convinced of his lost estate, and of an utter impossibility to save himself, he doth flee to the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and unto him who is that precious City of refuge, and there doth abide till our High Priest shall die, which shall not be forever. Or if ye will, it is a sweet travelling of the immortal soul, betwixt infinite misery, and infinite mercy, betwixt an utter impossibility to save ourselves, and a compleat ability in him to save to the uttermost, betwixt abounding sin, and superabounding mercy. Hence Faith is often holden forth to us in Scripture, under that notion of coming, *Isa. 55. 1. He, saye one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.* *Rev. 22. 17. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* *Heb. 7. 25. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him.* And we may say by the way, that if more sinners could be brought to this, to count all his own righteousness but filthy rags, and to believe that a man is as really justified before God, by imputed righteousness, as if it were by inherent holiness, surely such an one were not far from the Kingdom of God. Neither shall we stand long to point out this unto you, that it is your duty to believe, for it is brought not only from this place, but likewise from *Isa. 55. 1. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.* *Matth. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* *Job. 23. 4. To be justified in God, believe also in me.* *Isa. 55. 6. He, saye one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and be ye saved so many, Come, buy without money and without price.*

first. But Oh! it's a great misery of many (and that which may be a subject of perpetual lamentation) that we can neither be subject to the Law, as commanding, to obey it; or as threatening, to believe it; Nor to the Gospel as promising, to embrace it, and sweetly to receive it. O but that primitive temptation and delusion whereby *Satan* doth deceive our first father, is that whereby he yet seeks to catch and delude many souls, viz. That though we eat of the forbidden fruit, and walk in the vain imaginations of our own hearts, yet he doth suggest this to us, that we shall not die; but shall once be a God. This is *Satan's* great and deluding divinity. And therefore, to inforce this great and precious Command a little further, we shall propose these considerations.

First, That the Gospel hath laid no obstruction in our way of closing with Christ, and partaking of the effects of the Gospel: but on the contrary, the worst that the great impediment is our want of willingness, which we lay in our own way, as is clear from *John 6. 40.* *He will not come to me that he may get life:* as likewise from *Rev. 22. 17.* where the gates of the Gospel are cast open, and *whosoever will* are commanded to enter in: So that, although you may father your misbelief upon your inability, or that your spot is not the spot of his people, yet know that the rise and original of it is, the want of willingness. But, to make this more clear, we would have you knowing this, that all the qualifications annexed to this Commandment of Faith, as that in *Matth. 11. 28.* speaketh out the qualifications rather of those that will come, than of all these that ought to come; Or he inviteth these, that through the spirit of discouragement and misbelief, have the greatest reluctancy to come. And may not that

dinal and soul-reflecting promise, *Job. 6. 37.* Stop the mouth of unbelief, so that it should have nothing to say? *He that cometh unto me, I will give him life.* Ye may reduce your unbelief rather to the insufficiency of your will, than to the insufficiency of your will. And if once ye could come the length of willingnesse to embrace Jesus Christ, all other objections and knots should be sweetly loosed and dissolved.

Secondly, Consider, that though we should pray the one half of our time, and weep the other, yet if we want this noble grace of Faith, the wrath of God shall abide on us. What are all the works of these hypocrites, and these glistering acts of Law-sanctification, but a plunging of our selves in the ditch, untill our own cloaths abhorre us. Therefore it is, that after the Prophet *Zachary* hath made mention, in the 12. Chapter of his Prophecie, of making bitter lamentation for him whom we have pierced, as for an only Son; Yet in the beginning of the 13. Chapter, he maketh mention of a Fountain opened to the house of David, for sin and for uncleannesse. Which may intimate unto us, that, although we have washed our selves with our own tears, yet there is use of the blood of Christ, and that we must be washed in that fountain, even from our own righteousness, which are but as filthy rags.

Thirdly, Consider that great and monstrous sinfulness that is in this sin of unbelief, we will strain at a gnat, but many will easily swallow down the Camel. We will tith Mint and Anise, and fast twice in the week, but neglect faith and love, and judgement, which are the weightier things of the Law. And indeed, there are these things which speak out the insufficiency of unbelief. 1. That when the holy Ghost is sent to convince the world of sin, *John 16. 9.* he picketh upon this sin, as though there were no other.

other sin of which the world had need to be convinced, *we will convince the world of sin, because they believe not on the Son of God*: and (no doubt) there is more sinfulness in that sin, than in many breaches of the Moral Law, it being a sin against matchlesse love, and against that which is the remedy of sin. 3. That it is called by way of eminency, disobedience, as is clear from Heb. 4. 11. *Let any of you fall after the same example of unbelief*: or as the word may be rendered, *Let any of you fall after that example of disobedience*. Eph. 2. 8. 3. That among all these, they shall be eternally excommunicate from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, those that are guilty of this sin of unbelief, they are put in the first place, Rev. 12. 8. And, 4. that unbelief doth contradict and deny these three precious and cardinal Attributes of God. 1. Doth not unbelief contradict his faithfulness, and make him a liar? 1. Job. 1. 10. 2. Doth it not contradict the infiniteness of his power. And, 3. the infiniteness of his love, and supposeth that there is something too hard for him, which his power cannot reach, nor his infinite love overcome. We may reduce many of our questions, and disputings of his good will, to the original, viz. to the disputing of his power. No doubt, if we belong to him, we shall once sing, the note of lamentation over our unbelief, *This is our infirmity, for changes are from the right hand of the most High*.

And lastly, to enforce this precious command of Faith, consider that it is *His Command* which speaketh forth this, that we must not take an indulgence or dispensation to our selves, to believe, or not believe at our pleasure. And is it not a strange thing that Christians are less convinced of the breach of the Commandments of Faith, than of other

methinks? They think unbelief to be but a *Zan*,  
a little sin. And it proceedeth either from this, that  
the convictions of other sin (as the neglect of pray-  
er, or the sin of swearing, or committing adultery)  
do arise from a natural conscience: & (for there is  
somewhat of nature's light to make us abominable and  
hate them, when yet the light of nature will not  
lead us to the convictions of the sinfulness of misbe-  
lieve, it being a Gospel and more spiritual sin). Or  
it proceedeth from this, that unbelief doth ordina-  
rily pass vail'd under the vizard of some refined vice,  
as humility and modesty, though this ra-  
ther it may be said, that it is pride and ignorance,  
cloathed with the garments of humility. And no  
doubt, Christ doth account it obedience to this Com-  
mandment of Faith, the greatest act of humility,  
as is clear from *Rom. 10. 5.* wherein it is called sub-  
mission. They submitted not to the righteousness of  
God. Or else it proceedeth from this, that we con-  
ceive that the commandment of Faith, is not of so  
large extent as other commands, and so doth not  
bind us to the obedience of it. But know this, that  
it shall be the condemnation of the world, that they  
have not believed on the Name of the Son of God:  
And no doubt, but it is Satans great design and car-  
dinal project, to keep us back from obedience to the  
commandment of Faith, and that we should not lift-  
en to the precious promises of this everlasting Go-  
spel, but should reject the counsel of God against  
ourselves, and refuse his precious and divine call.

The second previous consideration that we would  
give, shall be to show you what are crosses that there  
is so much disputing of our interest, and so little be-  
lieving, that we are unstable as water, marring our  
own excellency, spending so much of our time in  
walking under a cloud, and are so seldom admitted

we read our names in these precious and eternal records of heaven? No doubt, these things have been shewed upon it, viz. 1. That we are more judging of God by his dispensations, then by His word, supposing ever the change of his dispensations speak forth the change of our state; This is mischief & divinity, this when sense cannot read love in his face, but he appeareth in frown, and to cast a cloud over it, then it is presumption. (saith sense) I read love in his heart, or in his word. But know ye what a self-denying practice of Believing Job, to say, I know he should kill me, it will believe in his word, though he make no dispensations your Bible; otherwise ye will stumble at the noon-tide of the day, he shall halt in your way. Know ye never what for a thing is this inward, to ascend in overcoming thoughts of his love, notwithstanding any thing that his dispensations might preach? We conceal what is the eyes of our faith were opened, we might see infinite love engraven on the darkest acts, as most dismal-like dispensations of his to us, though to be oftentimes written in dark and dim characters of sense.

2. There is this likewise which hath influence upon our so much disputing and misbelieving, a guilty conscience, and the entertainment of some predominant lust, which oftentimes occasioneth walking in darkness, and having no light. This is clear from, 1 Tim. 1. 19. where that precious Jew of Faith can be holden in no other place but in pure conscience, that is that royal palace wherein must dwell. And no doubty if once we make a work of a good conscience we will ever entertain Faith, not as some idol, when it is entertained, as exceedingly near the vigorous exercise of those graces which are evidences of our Faith. And certain

grace rather in its degrees, than in its sincerity or  
purity being only, is that which giveth the clearest evi-  
dence of Faith. Therefore, when we find not love  
in its high and eminent actings, we hardly will to  
make it any clearly concluding demonstration of our  
Faith.

3. As likewise, a bosom idol, when it is enter-  
tained, maketh us to lose much of our high esteem  
and reparation of Jesus Christ; which doth ex-  
ceedingly interrupt the sweet and precious actings of  
Faith. For it is certain, that if once the immortal  
soul be united to Jesus Christ by the bond of love  
and respect, then our Faith will increase with the in-  
crease of God. Our entertainment of a bosom idol  
is ordinarily punished with the want of the sensible  
impressions of his peace and of our interest in him;  
so that sometimes his own are constrained to cry  
out, *God hath departed from me, and he hath withdrawn  
his spirit from me, neither by dreams nor visions.*

4. There is that likewise that hath influence upon  
our not closing absolutely with Jesus Christ, but  
upon conditions and suppositions. We make not an  
absolute and blank resignation of our selves over un-  
to Christ, to hold fast the Covenant, notwithstanding  
he should dispense both bitter and bad things to  
us. But we conceive that Christs Covenant with  
believers, is like that Covenant that God made with  
Noah, that there should be summer and winter, seed  
time and harvest, night and day: unto a Christian.  
A Christian must have his night as well as his day:  
he must once sorrow in tears, before he can be joy-  
ful; and he must once go forth, bearing his cross and  
bearing his shame, before he can return bearing his crown in his glo-  
ry: and that this hath influence upon our un-  
closing may be seen from this. That when a Christian  
after his first closing with Christ, he begins with de-  
fection.



fallen in point of tenderness, in point of joy, in  
 in point of strength, so that his corruptions seem  
 to be weaker more then formerly; that he was  
 those seeming enjoyments of him which formerly  
 he had. And that much of his softnesse of heart is  
 now vanished, which is clear somewhat from  
 16. 2. that after they were enlightened, they endured  
 great fights of afflictions; For the word that is  
 rendered afflictions signifieth inward troubles through  
 the motions of sin, as well as outward afflictions  
 Gal. 4. 14. And God useth to dispense this way  
 his own, not only to take trial of the sincerity of  
 closing with him, but to make our faith more  
 firm and sure. And no doubt, if we close not  
 truly with Christ (when under these temptations  
 and trials) we will reject our confidence as a  
 illusion, and suppose it to be but a morning dream  
 therefore it were a noble and divine practice  
 Christian to close with Christ without reserve  
 knowing he doth dispence nothing but that which  
 tend to our advantage. And we would say to such  
 are under these temptations, that if ye endeavor  
 resist them, it is the most compendious and excellent  
 way to make your hearts, which now are dying  
 shall be as a watered Garden, and as springs of  
 life, whose waters fail not, and so make you strong  
 like, so that no temptation can rouse you up, but  
 shall be enabled to tread upon the high places of  
 earth, and to sing songs of triumph over your idols.  
 3. There is this likewise which hath more  
 in building of our faith more upon sense then  
 on Christ or his Word; and therefore it is,  
 Faith is so unconstant and changeable as the tide  
 we not knowing what such a thing meaneth, To  
 against hope, and to be strong in faith, giving glory  
 God: And we would only say unto you that

our confidence upon so sandy a foundation, that when the storm and wind of temptation shall blow, *our house shall fall to the ground*. As likewise, building of your faith upon sense, doth abate much of your joy, and much of your precious esteem of Jesus Christ, it being faith exercising it self upon an imaginable object, that maketh the Christian, *to rejoice in joy unspeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8.

6. There is this last that hath influence upon it, to wit, our slothfulnesse in the exercise of our spiritual duties, by which Faith should be entertained. Faith is a tender grace and a plant that must not be ruffled, but is nourished through the sap of other precious graces; but we grow remisse in our spiritual duties, and do turn our selves upon the bed of security, as a door upon the hinges. And doth not our drowsie slumber cloath us with rage, and make us fall into a deep sleep; while as, if we were diligent, *our souls should be made fat and rich*; Yea, slothfulnesse doth much impede assurance in this, that it hindereth the sweet communications of his love and respect, which assurance may be kept in life, *Cant. 5. 1.* *it maketh our poverty come on us as an armed man, and our want as one that travelleth*. And with-  
 it kenerh loose the chain by which our corruptions are tyed and maketh them to lift up their head, which our assurance is much darkned and impeded, and our hope is much converted into disdaine and despair. And we would only say this, it is the diligent Christian that is the believing Christian; it is the believing Christian, that is the diligent Christian, there being such a sweet reciprocation between these two precious graces, that they live and grow together.

Now thirdly, we shall shur up our discourse with in pointing out a little what are those things that

that do obstruct a Christians closing with Christ and believing in his precious Name.

I. We conceive that this wofull evil doth spring and rise from that fundamentall ignorance of the truth, that there is a God: as is clear from Heb. 11. where there is required as a qualification of a Christian, That he should believe that God is: And assuredly till once this precious truth be imprinted upon a soule, as with a pen of iron, and point of a diamond we will look upon the Gospel as an Utopian fable, and a deluding notion, to reach unstable soules, who know not the way to attain unto real blessedness. And truly it is a fault in many, that they begin dispute there being in Christ before they know that he is Christ: and so dispute their interest in him before they believe his being, and thus there is such one as is called Christ.

II. Our coming unto Christ is obstructed from the want of the real and spiritual convictions of our desperate and lost estate without Jesus Christ; so that our unspeakable misery is the want of him which is clear from Heb. 12. 31. *Woe unto them that will come and more unto thee.* And it is evident from Rev. 2. 16. 18. That such a delusion as this doth overtake many, that they can reign as Kings with Jesus Christ, and that they can build their happiness and establish their eternal felicity upon another foundation. But O that we could once win to this, believe what we are without Christ, and to believe what we shall be in the enjoyment of him: with one eye to descend and look upon these deep draughts that the mystery of iniquity hath imprinted in your immortall soules, and withall to reflect upon wages of sin, which is death: and be constrained to cry out, *Woe is me, for I am undone.* And with other eye to ascend and look to that help that is

to make use of the righteousness of a crucified Saviour, that is what we want in our selves, we may get it abundantly made in him.

III. There is this likewise that obstructeth our coming to Christ, our too much addictedness to pleasures and carnal delights of a passing world, which is clear from Luk. 14. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. where these that were invited to come to the feast of this Gospel, they do make their excuse, and with one consent do refuse it. Some pretending an impossibility to come, and some pretending an unavoidable inconvenience in coming. O! What a ridiculous thing is that poor contentment, that these deluded sinners used to Christ, *why you have neglected?* And is it not the world the great plea and argument, that they make use of, when they will not come and make use of Christ?

IV. There is this lastly, which doth obstruct our coming to Christ, their unwillingness to be saved to their own righteousness. Which is clear from Rom. 10. 13. And we conceive if ever these were believed (which are the great Topics out of which all these arguments may be brought to persuade you to embrace Christ) to wit, the excellency of His person on whom we are to believe, and the infinite losse that there do sustain, who shall eternally be rejected of him. We might be persuaded to entertain a divine abstractedness and holy retirement from all things that are here below, and to set our desires alone upon him, who is the everlasting wonder of Angels and the glory of the higher Heavens. And we once suppose the unspeakable happiness of this whole Faith is now advanced unto everlasting felicity and fruition, and hath entered into that everlasting possession of the promises: might we not be won-

strained to cry out, *It is good for us once to be there*.  
 Christ weepeth to us in the Law, but we do not la-  
 ment; & he typeth to us in the Gospel, but we do not  
 dance: He is willing to draw us with the cords of me-  
 and with the bonds of love, and yet we will not have  
 him to reign over us. May not Angels laugh at our  
 folly, that we should so undervalue this Prince of  
 love, and should contemn him who is bolden'd  
 to high esteem and reverence in these two great As-  
 semblies that are above, of Angels, and of the  
 spirits of just men made perfect? Christ hath now  
 given us the first and second Summons, the day is  
 preaching when these sad and woful summons are  
 besent against us, of *departing from him, into these con-  
 suming flames*, out of which there is no redemption;  
 and this shall be the capstone of our misery, that we  
 had once life in offer, but did refuse it: And  
 though there were four gates standing open toward  
 the north, by which we might have entered into  
 that everlasting rest, yet we choos'd rather to walk  
 in the paths that lead down to death, and take both  
 the chambers of hell. O but there are many that  
 think the Gospel cunningly devised fables and so-  
 phistry, (they being unwilling to believe in  
 which sense cannot comprehend, nor reason reach  
 and this is the reason why the Gospel is not imbe-  
 red, but is rejected as a humane invention, and a  
 morning dream, &c.

SE

## SERMON II.

*Joh. 3. 23. This is his Commandment,  
that ye should believe on the Name of his  
Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

**T**Here are three great and cardinal myste-  
ries, in the unfolding of which, all a  
Christians time ought to be spent. First,  
There is that precious and everlasting  
mystery of Christs love and condescendency, which  
no intellectual spirit, the Angels, are nor able  
to comprehend. Secondly, There is that won-  
derful mystery of the infinite delectation and which  
no do of the heart, which man may never be able  
to fathom and comprehend. And, thirdly,  
there is that precious mystery of that eternal felicity  
and blessedness that is purchased unto the Saints,  
as once they shall reign with Christ, not a thou-  
sand years only, but throughout all the ages of ever-  
lasting and endless eternity: so that there is this  
difference betwixt the Garden of everlasting de-  
lights, that Christ hath purchased to the Saints, and  
the first Paradise and Eden wherein man was placed.  
There was a secret gate in the first, through which a  
serpent had once entered in, might go out again:  
but in this second and precious Eden there is no  
going out. And all that is to be known of  
these three mysteries, is much comprehended in this  
one word, that they cannot fully be known. And was  
that proficient in the study of the first mystery,  
had almost attained to the highest Cliffs of  
knowledge, and yet he is constrained to profess him-  
self to be ignorant of this: Hence is that word,

Ep. 3. 19. That ye may know the love of Christ, which  
 passeth knowledge. And is it not a mysterious com-  
 mand, to desire people to know that which cannot  
 be known? The meaning whereof we conceive  
 be this in part, that Paul pressed this upon them  
 that they should study to know that this mystery  
 Christs love could not be known. Jeremiah was  
 blessed proficient in the knowledge and study of  
 second mystery, he had some morning, so some  
 discoveries of that, and yet though in some mea-  
 he had fastened that deep & yet he is constrained  
 say not, chap. 47. vers. 9. The deep is inaccessible  
 all things, and desperate is wisdom, who can know  
 And indeed, that which Solomon speak of King  
 Prov. 4. 20 may well be said of all men in this  
 respect, The heart is not taught, and the ear is not  
 And the heart of man is unsearchable. Also Apoc.  
 Paul himself a blessed proficient in the study of  
 christian mystery, having some morning and yet the  
 discoveries of that promised rest and was once  
 upon a throne in heaven, and yet when he is be-  
 coming to speak of it, 1 Cor. 13. he declares he  
 is ignorant of the knowledge of this prom-  
 ised mystery in mans blessing, and breath out,  
 I can see, I can hear, neither have I covered  
 the heart of man, the things which God hath pre-  
 pared for them that love him. And if there be any  
 further to be known of these mysteries, the  
 of Faith is found with them among all the graces  
 Springing up in the soul like of these great depths  
 God is not the grace of Faith that whereby a  
 man doth take up the invisible excellency and  
 of a dying Christ? Is not Faith that precious grace  
 which a Christian must take up the spot and blot  
 that are within himself? And is not the  
 of Faith, that precious grace that placeth a Chri-



opening up of mount Pisga; and there stretch him  
 out a sight of the promised Land? And doth open a  
 door in heaven, thorow which a Christian is admitted  
 to see Christ sitting upon the Throne? And  
 Faith hath not only a kind of Omnipotency, as  
 that; That all things are possible to them that believe;  
 but it hath a kind of Omnipiscency, and all know-  
 ledge that is to be taken up, and comprehend the great-  
 est myseries of heaven, according to that word,  
 Prov. 9. 5. No man hath seen the Lord shall understand  
 all things; As if he said, there is nothing impossi-  
 ble to a believing Christian. As likewise; Faith  
 is that grace that must take aside the veil that is  
 spread over the face of a crucified Christ. And Faith  
 is that precious spy that goeth forth, and taketh up  
 these wonderful excellencies that are in him; The  
 gates of love; as it were; is horn blind; and seeth  
 nothing; where with to salute it self; but that which  
 is presented unto it by this noble and excellent grace  
 of Faith.

Now before we shall speak any thing to these  
 things that we did propose to speak of it as the last  
 reason; we shall yet speak a little now of some things  
 which are necessary to be known; for the discov-  
 ering of the nature of justifying Faith; which is  
 the great commandment of this everlasting Gospel;  
 and that which we would first speak to, shall be this.  
 What is the reason and ground that the Gospel com-  
 mands of righteousness and life? (and of the exal-  
 ted things of this everlasting Covenant) shall be  
 through the exercise of the grace of Faith? For it  
 is not said in the Scripture that repentance justifieth,  
 that love justifieth; or that mortification justifieth;  
 but it is Faith only that justifieth. and this Faith by  
 which a Christ is imputed unto the promise; so that  
 it is clear, that Faith is that Commandment through

which are conveyed to us the great blessings of the everlasting Covenant.

I. And the first ground of it is this, it is through Faith, that all our blessings may be known to be by love and by free and unsearchable grace; as is clear, Rom. 4. 16. While the Apostle is giving a reason why the inheritance is conveyed to a Christian through Faith. *It is of faith* (saith he) *that it might be of grace* for if the inheritance were conveyed to a Christian through a Covenant of Works, then these spots draughts of infinite love, and of unsearchable grace should not be written on our inheritance, as is clear Rom. 4. 15. And it is that great designe of Christ to make his grace conspicuous in conveying salvation to us through Faith.

II. There is this second ground likewise of it, that all the promises and blessings of this everlasting Covenant might be sure and steadfast to us, therefore they are conveyed to us through the exercise of the grace of Faith; as is clear, Rom. 4. 16. *They are of faith* (saith he) *that they might be sure*; or as the word is, *that they might be settled*, when the promises of life and of eternal salvation were conveyed to us through mans obedience, were they not then uncertain and unstable? But is not heaven your everlasting crown now, steadfast unto you, seeing you have that golden pillar of Christs everlasting righteousness to be the foundation of your Faith, and strength of your confidence in the day of need?

III. There is this third ground why the promises and excellent things of this Gospel are conveyed to a Christian through the exercise of Faith, that boasting and gloristion might be excluded, according to that word, Rom. 3. 27. *By what law is boasting excluded?* Not by the law of works, but by the law of Faith. And certainly, seeing Christians have all

things of heaven conveyed to them through the exercise of Faith; think ye not, that this shall be your last song when ye shall be within the gates of that new Jerusalem? Not unto us, nor unto you, but unto them: *Doth belong the glory of our salvation.* O what excellent dignity were it, but for one half hour to be admitted to hear these spotlesse songs that are sung by these thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of holy Angels, that are round about his Throne! Doth not David that sweet singer of Israel, now sing more sweetly nor he did while he was here below? Doth not deserverd Haman now chant forth the praises and everlasting song of him that sitteth upon the Throne? And doth not afflicted Job now sing sweetly after his captivity is reduced, and he entered within that land, where the voice of joy and gladnesse is continually heard? Would ye have a description of Heaven? I could give it no terms so suitable as this, Heaven is a rest without a rest, for though there remain a rest for the righteous, yet, *Rev. 4. 8. These four beasts that stand before the Throne, they rest not night nor day, crying, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty;* yet there is much divine quietnesse in that holy unquietnesse that is above.

I V. There is this last ground why the blessings of the Gospel, and life and righteousnesse are conveyed to us thorow the exercise of Faith, that the way to attain to these things might be pleasant and easy; we are certainly perswaded, that the way of winning to Heaven by a Covenant of Works was much more unpleasant and difficult. But is it not an easie way of entering into the Holy of holies, to win unto it through the exercise of Faith? *Are not all wise men's wayes pleasant,* and are not all bee paths straight? Was not that just self-denial in one, that

kind, he should not take up a Crown though it were  
lying at his foot. But as that could be self-denial, do  
possess the benefits of many; so that though the  
Crown of immortal Glory and eternal life be  
helping at your feet, yet ye will not imitate it,  
make it up, for not the hatred of many to Christ  
covered with death, and therefore, I am sure, ye  
be declared before the Congregation, he should be

Now that what we have spoken upon this point  
be more clear, and that the nature of justifying  
Faith be not mistaken. We would have you take  
notice of these things, 1. That God would have  
us know, That the grace of Faith doth not justify a Chri-  
stian, as it is a work, nor because of any inhe-  
rent excellency and dignity that is in this grace, or  
any other grace of the spirit; but Faith doth not  
justify a Christian instrumentally and objectively  
that is, it is that by which a Christian is just-  
ifying hold on the precious object of it, the ri-  
ghteousness of Christ. And to clear this, we would  
only have you reporting this, That Faith doth just-  
ify a Christian, not because it is a work, but because it is  
with Christ, which some vainly are bold to as-  
sert, because there is not any dignity or worth in the  
of Faith, in closing with Christ, that can be the fo-  
undation of our justification, else it were to confound  
that precious decree of free grace.

2. There is this that we would have you all know-  
ing, That Faith is not the instrument of Justification  
(as Justification is taken in an active sense) though  
it is the instrument of Justification, as it is taken  
in a passive sense: and the ground of this conclusion  
is this, because it is impossible that any action  
man can be an instrument of any action in God.  
And therefore that phrase that you have so ordin-

fallen off. That Faith justifies, it is that to be re-  
solved, That we are justified by Faith.

3. There is this that we would have you know-  
ing, that betwixt Christians blessing by Faith with  
the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the justifica-  
tion of a sinner; May there be no natural and indis-  
soluble connexion betwixt these two; but only  
there is a connexion of divine appointment; and of  
the grace; though we conceive there is a natural  
aptitude in the grace of Faith, to lay hold on the  
righteousness of Christ, more then there is in any  
other grace of the Spirit; may we say yet there is a  
more natural aptitude and fitness in the hand to re-  
ceive then in any other organ of the body.

4. There is this also that we would have you  
knowing; That a Christian in his first-clothing with  
Christ; Christ (considered as crucified) is the im-  
mediate object of his Faith, and not Christ consid-  
ered as his personal excellencies. Hence is taken  
the Scripture; that Christ is crucified, is holden  
forth as the immediate object of justifying Faith;  
Rom. 3: 25, 26. And the ground of  
this election is this; because that it is the formal  
object of justifying Faith, which doth formally  
justify the sinner; and on which Faith doth imme-  
diately lay hold as a ransom to his justice, and  
as a righteousness in which the soul dare venture  
to be found when it shall stand before the judgement  
seat of God; And certainly, this is Christ as obedi-  
ent to the death of the crosse. And it is likewise  
that the thing which doth engage the soul to  
Christ, is not onely because he is good in himself,  
but because he is good to us.

5. And there is this lastly; that we would have  
you knowing; That though faith doth alone justi-  
fy, yet Faith doth not justify being alone; Hence

## The Mystery of Faith

which we have so often in Schools, viz. *justitiam solum, sine opibus*, that Faith justifieth alone, though not being alone, as James doth speak, *Faith without work is dead, and is of itself*.

Now that which secondly we shall speak to, shall be this, To point out to you some differences betwixt justifying Faith, which is in a real Believer, and temporary Faith which is in an Hypocrite, and one that is destitute of that everlasting hope, though he do pretend to have it.

And first, That there is such a thing as temporary Faith, is clear from Luk. 8. 13. It is said there, *Some, That they believed for a season, yea, in Acts 8.* It is said of Simon Magus (who was in the gall bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity) he believed. And these in Joh. 2. 23. *When they did behold his miracles, they believed on Jesus Christ: and yet conceived, that their faith was not sincere, and this was not saving Faith.* And indeed ye may see the difference betwixt these two in the very name temporary, for this is such a Faith as doth not continue long with him that hath it, but doth vanish and passe away, for as this is certain, *that an hypocrite will not always call upon God, Job 27. 10.* So it is also certain, that a hypocrite will not always believe in God. I tell you, that the longest time a hypocrite doth keep his Faith, Job hath set down in his 18 Chap. vers. 14. *Their hope (saith he) shall bring them to the king of terrors, and then is shot out of them and their tabernacle; their faith will bring them no further then the gates of death, and then their faith will flee away as a dream, and vanish as a vision of the night.*

11. There is this difference likewise betwixt them, That temporary Faith, it closeth with Ch

as a Saviour, and for righteousness, but is clothed  
 with Christ as a Prince, and for sanctification;  
 but justifying Faith taketh Christ as well for a  
 Prince, as it taketh him for a Saviour: and if some  
 did discern who was the true Mother of the  
 child by that, that she who would have the child  
 divided, was not the mother of the child; so we  
 may say, that they who would divide Christ in his  
 Offices, it is an evidence that they are not among  
 those who are actually made partakers of the Adop-  
 tion of children; there is somewhat of this pointed  
 out in Job, 6. 66. where that which made many who  
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 him, was because of the hardness of his command,  
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 certain that it is a greater difficulty for a Christian  
 to take Christ as a Prince, then as a Saviour; for by  
 this he must make an absolute resignation of himself  
 over to Christ, never to be reduced. O when saw  
 you such a sight of Christ, that ye were constrained  
 to cry out (without a complement) in him; Truly  
 I am thy servant, I am thy servant? O were ye never  
 punished with one of his eyes, nor overtaken with one  
 of his smites? Believe me, they who see him thus,  
 do believe that *His commands are not grievous*.

III. There is this difference, that temporary  
 Faith is attained unto, without the exercise of the  
 Law, but justifying Faith is not attained so with-  
 out some measure of the exercise of the Law: this is  
 seen, *Mark 4. 5.* where speaking of these temporary  
 believers, it is said of them, *that the fruits did imme-  
 diately spring up, &c.* Are these not some (it may  
 be here) who think they do believe, and yet were ne-  
 ver in any measure trembling under the discovering  
 & condemning power of the Law? Is not that a my-  
 stry, that one should bring forth without traveling?  
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## The Mystery of Faith

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*This is an hard saying, who can hear it?* And it is  
certain that it is a greater difficulty for a Christian  
to take Christ as a Prince, then as a Saviour: for by  
that he must make an absolute resignation of himself  
over to Christ, never to be reduced. O when saw  
you such a sight of Christ, that ye were constrained  
to cry out (without a complement) in him, *Truly  
I am thy servant, I am thy creature*? O were ye never  
possessed with one of his eyes, nor overtaken with one  
of his words? Believe me, they who see him thus,  
do believe that *his commands are not grievous*.

III. There is this difference, that temporary  
Faith is attained unto, without the exercise of the  
Law, but justifying Faith is not attained so with-  
out some measure of the exercise of the Law: this is  
clear, *Mark 4. 5.* where speaking of these temporary  
believers, it is said of them, *that the fruits did imme-  
diately spring up, &c.* Are there not some (it may  
be here) who think they do believe, and yet were ne-  
ver in any measure trembling under the discovering  
& condemning power of the Law? Is not that a my-  
stery, that one should bring forth without traveling?

And

## The Mystery of Faith

And is not this a mystery in Christianity; when  
I should believe before he had found the pangs of  
New Birth? I am afraid of this, that many of  
those taken up our Religion is our food: I shall  
see many who take up Religion before Religion  
takes up them. But would ye know the properties  
of Christian Faith? It is a vigorous Faith; it is a  
true Faith that is taken up at our pleasure. And  
would only say these two things to you; be persua-  
ded of this, that Hypocrisy may be spun with a  
small thread; so that the most dissimulating Chris-  
tian may take up that desperate enmity that is to the  
flow long and hard work under the name of a Ser-  
vice with men that were most dissimulating? I  
wrote in this that we would say, that among  
those that shall be eternally excommunicated from  
the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his  
Kingdom, the hypocrite shall have the bitterest  
Divine Indignation presented unto them. Hence  
I say that Christ, when he would tell the world  
that only those shall have life in Heaven is always  
ye shall go to that place where Hypocrites and Sin-  
ners are, and so it would be of your contentment, to  
by the saddle of the Lord ye would reach the  
ward part of the way, before ye go down to the  
world that is your right hand; a dangerous hard  
work for you. We confesse it is sad to confesse  
these many disappointments that many in the  
days shall once meet with.

But there is this last difference between  
Living Faith, and temporary Faith, That there  
is three precious effects of justifying Faith, which  
temporary believer cannot win to.

1. To be denied to all his enjoyments and ac-  
coments, and walk humbly under them, for we  
say, that it is impossible for an hypocrite to be

and in his enjoyments, he maketh such a way of  
 them, and worshippeth them, or rather he worshippeth  
 himself in them. There are three great graces that  
 a hypocrite doth pursue after, (though he rather  
 looketh them as gifts then as graces,) Knowledge,  
 Joy, and Humility. And though he be but little  
 acquainted with any of the three, (or rather not  
 going into a saving way) yet least of all can he attain  
 to the last, yea, we may judge that there is always  
 such an his booke a standing conviction, that he  
 shall never win unto that glorious place of glory.  
 Should ye never win so this to count your own right-  
 eousness as lively faith, and to repose alone in  
 the righteousness of a crucified Saviour? I would  
 wish this upon you by the way (O Christians of this  
 generation) forget your perfections, and remem-  
 ber your imperfections; have a holy conviction of your  
 sinfulness, but have a Divine remembrance of  
 your short coming, look more to what is before  
 us, perfected, nor to what is behind, and thus shall  
 you have true justifying Faith.

a. It is an effect of justifying Faith to be unde-  
 ling constant and Divine impression of the precious  
 worth of Jesus Christ according to that word  
 1 Pet. 2. 7. To you who believe, Christ is precious. It  
 is not said, that Christ was precious, or shall be pre-  
 cious, but it is said, He is precious, which doth im-  
 ply (as we use to speak) a continued act. Did ye  
 ever know what it was to dwell twenty four hours  
 under the impression of the matchless excellency and  
 precious worth of a crucified Saviour? I will pose you  
 with this. Are there not some here (and else-  
 where) that pass under the notion of Saints, that  
 never knew what it was to dwell half an hour under  
 the high and elevating thoughts of the preciousness  
 of Jesus Christ? So that we profess we are converted  
 whether

## *The Myſtery of Faith*

whether we ſhall call him precious or undervalued, but we may conjoyne theſe two names together, and he is precious (and yet) undervalued Chriſt.

1. By true juſtifying Faith, a Chriſtian winneth mortification of his inviſible and predominant luſts, which is impoſſible for a temporary Believer to win ſo. And is there not a great difference betwixt an Idol when it is caſt out, and an Idol which goeth out? I will tell you the great mortification of hypocrites, the devil was living in them as in that was a black one, and now he cometh againe, transformeth himſelf into an Angel of light, and was living in them before by his ſpirit of profaneſſe, and now he liveth in them by the ſpirit of hypocriſie, and countreiting of theſe things that were ever clear attainments, while it is the noble dignity of Faith, *Mat. 11. 9. To purifie the heart.* But there are not many here who never knew what it was to mortifie one luſt for Chriſt? Can ſuch a deluſion overtake you, O thickets! That ye ſhall reign with Chriſt, if ye die not with him? There is an opinion vented in theſe dayes, that there may be repentance in heaven, and I think it would ſeem that Chriſtians of this age have much of that opinion, are ſo little in repentance while we are here below, but know that Faith and Sanctification are two incomparable companions: And let me tell you, if you would know the compend of the precious exerciſe of Faith? It is this, Faith hath three great things, it perpetually contemplates and views. 1. Faith looketh to the promiſe, and there it doth rejoyce and reſt upon it. 2. Faith looketh to the duties that are commanded, and there it tryeth out, *Here are we, O Lord, and hearken unto the voice of the Lord.* And, 3. Faith looketh to the crowne, and there it doth exult and ſweetly rejoyce in that great expectation.

And O what a sight is that, to behold that everlast-  
ing Prince standing at the end of our race, having a  
sword in his right hand, with this Motto inscrib-  
ed on it, *He that overcometh is the end shall be found?*  
And what a Faith suppose ye shall it be thought when  
ye shall get on that immortal Crown of blessed-  
ness? What think ye is the exercise of these that are  
here? O heaven, heaven, if we did know it would  
not be in a holy extasy of desire, till we were  
there! And blessed be he eternally, that hath pur-  
chased that precious felicity to us.

Now we shall at this time shut up our discourse,  
speaking a little to these things, in which a Chris-  
tian doth ordinarily meet with assurance of his in-  
terest in God; and is put to the divine strings of the  
arpa of Faith, for there are some sealing times to a  
Christian.

1. The first time of the sealing is, after the mor-  
tification of some predominant lust and idol, then  
they are admitted to read their names in these pre-  
cious and ancient records of heaven, and to see (in  
these Books) their unworthy names written by the  
hand of that everlasting Prince. This is clear,  
Rev. 2. 17. *To him that overcometh will I give a white  
stone, and in the stone a new name written, that no man  
knows, saving he that receiveth it.* And from that  
Tim. 4. 8. Believe me, more mortification  
would make more believing, but would ye know  
the original of misbelief? It is the want of spiritlike  
mortification of our lusts. I know not  
where the most part of us intendeth to lodge at night  
but this is certain, that wee live with much com-  
munion with our lusts, and these predominants  
that doth so much possesse.

2. It is readily a sealing time to a Christian,  
when he is admitted to the divine sacraments of  
these

these satisfying delights than to be God  
Christ, when was he that they should cryed  
renewed by his blood to eternal life? and  
that when he was brought to the banqueting table  
of his Father's house he was locked in? Believe that  
communion with an absent Christ, would  
more intimation (in a divine manner) of bond  
with him, we desire to bless that care  
the reach of all these disputing, and question  
that we live in much joy and unity. *John 1. 1*

III. This is a fasting time to a Christian,  
he is much in the exercise of secret Prayer,  
much conversing, and corresponding with  
that duty, is is clear from that word in *Dan.*  
when Daniel was praying with the evening oblation  
in the house, verse he means with a divine influence  
of his Peace with God, O man greatly beloved of  
the original hath it, O man of great desires  
was desirable indeed; and prebious to him who  
with the Trinity in his right hand.

IV. This is also a fasting time to a Christian  
when he is called to the exercise of some great  
and is to be put upon some eminent holy em  
duty, this is clear; for as *Jer.* 1. Where *Jeramias*  
was called to preach the Gospel unto such a re  
ous people, then he hath his eternal election  
shared unto him. Before then was formed in spirit  
of God, Christ, with him, given them  
to be there to them for forty dayes, and the  
strength of it they may go many dayes journey  
to go. There is also another fasting time: When  
Christian is first begotten in a previous and ever  
ing hope; for when at first Christians began  
acquaint with Christ, even then sometimes  
and when he is bound to his home and everlasting  
And this is the ground why some of them will  
stand



...in Christ, and so much in all extremities of  
...much in the extremities of the grace of  
...much in the extremities of the grace of  
...it is even because of the solemn impression  
...their interest in Christ, that, as it were, they  
...taken in to read, their own numbers legi-  
...in the Lamb book of life, w. 7. 14. 15.  
...and there is the last time, when he is calling  
...in a Christian, and there is no more in par-  
...long and afflicting dispensation, when the  
...is but (even times more than ordinary, or when  
...God condescend to manifest himself to his own  
...is that John may wish both of the whole  
...of Heaven. What is not to be believed in the  
...for the testimony of Jesus Christ, and the  
...our blessed Lord Jesus, as you see in  
...place 2d. Cor. 12. 16. Throughout outward  
...our inward and outward duty by day,  
...Now we would press you to be more striven in  
...of this precious grace. And I shall tell  
...of Christianity in the last w. 14. 15.  
...to spare you selves in Christ in the  
...and excellencies. And 2d. by hope, to be  
...that precious Grace, and the everlasting  
...that are to be given to the saints. 3. And 4.  
...to be crucifying your idols, and  
...by patience, to be possessing your souls, until  
...shall pass through that darkness, to that  
...everlasting delight. And as for those that  
...and undervalue the blood of the new test-  
...Covenant, (and I would have all Christians to  
...in closing with Christ, and to have who have  
...in their cross, to consider this, that  
...of the living and eternal God. And this is  
...as we believe, according to what we  
...1. 3. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

ministered to him. It is a remarkable phrase; be-  
 of this the wrath of God will not be a Pilgrim  
 a misbeliever, that will turn aside to tarry but  
 night, but the wrath of God (to them who  
 not believe) shall be their household companion  
 and shall dwell with them; and wo, wo to  
 eternally, who have this sad and everlasting com-  
 on to abide with them, *the wrath of a living God*.  
 There is one thing we wou'd have these know  
 that among all these who are eternally to be de-  
 red from Jesus Christ, misbelievers are put in  
 foremost rank, *Rev. 21. 8*. There he is to put  
*the fearful and unbelieving*. And from *2 Thess.*  
*When Christ shall come from heaven with ten thousand*  
*of his Saints*, (What to do) It is even to en-  
 vengeance on those that they see the wrath of the God  
 that is, who do not believe. And I pose your  
 hearts with this, whether or not your names  
 written there in that roll, among these who shall  
 cut off? And that word, *2 Thess. 2. 12*. That  
 might be damned who believed not, but took pleasure  
 in unrighteousness. O but the wrath of a dying Ch-  
 and of a crucified Saviour is dreadful? It is  
 sad and terrible then the wrath of God should  
 been if Christ had not died. I will tell you (O  
 postures in Zion) the worst news that ever  
 published in your ears, and it is this, Christ  
 and rose again, (and to those that are begotten  
 lively hope, they are glad tidings of great joy,  
 wherein they may comfort themselves) but ye  
 wear a rough garment to deceive, and go to hea-  
 in your own apprehension? But, O the sad de-  
 pointment that is waiting on many such. And  
 close with this, we would obtest you, as ye  
 answer to your terrible & dreadful Judge,  
 shall stand one day upon his Throne, which is

in the clouds, we obtest you by all the joyes  
 heaven, and we obtest you by all the everlast-  
 ing pain of hell, and we obtest you by all the  
 things that are written within the volume of this  
 book, and by all the sweet & comfortable Pro-  
 phets that are in this everlasting Gospel, and by  
 the love that ye owe to your immortal souls, and  
 that we would not crucifie Christ afresh, believe,  
 embrace the offers which are presented now  
 to you. Know ye whether or nor this shall be  
 your last summons that ye shall get to believe  
 in Christ, if ye do reject it, Christ shall come from  
 heaven, and pronounce that sad and lamentable  
 curse to you, *Depart from me ye cursed, I know  
 you not.* Now, to him that can blesse these things  
 in you, we desire to give praise.

## SERMON III.

*Joh. 3. 23. This is his Commandment,  
 that ye should believe on the Name of his  
 Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

It was a command that *Solomon* gave unto his  
 Son, *Prov. 22. 26. That he should not be sure-  
 ty for debt, nor should be one of those that strike  
 with hands;* But, O! what spoileſſe breaches  
 this Command hath our blessed Lord *Jesus*  
 committed, when he did condescend to be surety  
 for our debt, and to pay that, that was impossible  
 for us to satisfie? Hath not Christ made a preci-  
 ous exchange with sinners? He wreathed about  
 his own precious neck, that bond and yoke of our  
 iniquities, and hath given to us that unweariable,  
 easy, and portable yoke of his Commandments  
 among

## The Mystery of Faith.

among which this is one, That we should believe on him: *God sent Christ to make sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God.* And is not this the condemnation of the world, that we will not believe in him? that will not delight our selves in loving of Him. I would say this to you, that though you should weep the one half of your dayes, and pray the other half, yet, if ye want this noble grace Faith, Your righteousness shall be but like a *strawd clowd and filthy rags before him*: for it is praying without believing, but a taking of blessed Name in vain? What is our confession upon the most lively and precious Truth of God, without believing? Is it not a lying to the holy Ghost, and a flattering of God with our mouth? And we would have you knowing that there is a sweet harmony that is now made up betwixt *Moses and Christ, betwixt the Law and the Gospel.* The Law bringeth us to Christ as a Saviour, and Christ bringeth us back again to the Law to be a rule of our walk, to which must subject our selves. So then, would ye know the compend of a Christians walk? It is a *travelling betwixt mount Sinai and mount Zion, betwixt Moses and Christ, betwixt the Law and the Gospel.* And we conceive that the more deep the exercise of the Law be in a Christians conscience, before his closing with Christ, there is much the more precious and excellent advantage waiting for him.

1. There is this advantage that waiteth on deep exercise of the Law: that it is the way win to much establishment in the Faith, when once we begin to close with Christ. O Christ, would ye know that which maketh the superstructure and building of grace to be within y

...ing wall, and as a tattering fence? (So they  
...you are in hazard to raze the foundation  
...is this. Ye were not under the exaltation  
...the Law before your believing in Jesus Christ,  
...are some who do not abide three dayes at  
...Sinaï, and these shall not dwell many dayes  
...mount Zion.

11. There is this advantage that waiteth on  
...deep exercise of the Law, it maketh Christ  
...to a mans soul. What is that which  
...the soul of a Christian with many high  
...excellent thoughts of Christ? Is it not this,  
...the Law registering our Band, and put-  
...us (as we use to speak) to the horn? that  
...the Law cursing us, and using the sen-  
...of condemnation against us. That which  
...us have such low and undervaluing  
...of precious Christ, is, because the most  
...of us are not acquainted with the deep and  
...exercise of the Law: that is a mystery;  
...the most part of Christians practice. Ye  
...that there were four streams which were  
...from the Paradise of God, into which man  
...first placed: And so we may say, that there  
...four golden streams, by which lost and de-  
...man is brought back again to this Eden  
...Paradise of everlasting delight. First, there  
...the Precious stream of Christs righteousness,  
...which we must be justified. And secondly,  
...there is that stream of his Sanctification, by  
...which we must be purified. Thirdly, There  
...is that stream of the Wisdom of Christ, by which  
...we must be conducted through this wilderness  
...wherein we have lost our way. And fourthly,  
...there is that stream of Christs Redemption, by  
...which we must be delivered from the power of  
...our enemies, and must turn the Barrel in the gate.

It is by the Redemption of Christ that we have  
 once sing that triumphant song, *O Death, where  
 is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?* O  
 all these streams will be sweet and refreshing to  
 soul that is hotly pursued by the Law. So  
 as we see not the ugliness of our leprosy in  
 glass of the Law, we have our own *Abana  
 Parpar*, that we think may do our turn:  
 when once our case is truly laid open to us,  
 will we be content to wash our selves in *Jor  
 dan* seven times.

III. There is this advantage that waiteth on  
 deep exercise of the Law, that it maketh a Ch  
 ristian live constantly under the impression of  
 sinfulness of sin. What is it that maketh sin  
 exceeding sinful to a Christian? Is it not this, He  
 been forty dayes in *Moses School*? And we  
 conceive that the ground why such fools as we ma  
 a mock of sin, is, because we know not what  
 to be under the power of his wrath, and the  
 prehensions of the indignation of God.

But now to come to that which we intend  
 speak of: We told you, at the first occasion  
 we spake upon these words, that there were  
 many excellent things concerning the grace of Fa  
 ith holden forth in them. The first thing (wh  
 was holden forth concerning this radica  
 of Faith) was the infinite advantage that  
 doth under to a Christian through the exercise  
 Faith, and giving obedience to this comma  
 which we cleared to be holden forth, not on  
 from the scope, but also from the nature of  
 command. And now to speak a little to  
 point, we shall propose these considerations  
 that may abundantly shew how advantage  
 thing this excellent grace of Faith is.

I. The first Consideration, that speaketh

That faith maketh Christ precious to a soul, according to that word, *1 Pet. 2. 7. To you that believe, Christ is precious.* And we would have you knowing this, that Faith maketh Christ more precious to a soul, nor sense, or any other thing can make him. And first, Faith maketh Christ more precious nor sense, because the estimation which the grace of Faith hath of Christ, it is builded upon the excellency of his Person: but the estimation of sense it is builded upon the excellency of his actions; so that, because he is such to them, therefore they love and esteem him. But that Heroick grace of Faith, it looketh up the excellency of Christs person, and that maketh him precious to them. Secondly, Faith maketh Christ more precious then sense, because sense looketh to that love which Christ manifesteth in his Face, in his Hands, and in his Feet: but Faith looketh to that love which is in his heart. Sense will cry out, *Who is like to thee? whose countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the Cedar: whose hands are as gold rings set with Beryl, and whose legs are like pillars of marble set in sockets of Gold.* Sense will look to the sayings of Christ, and will wonder; it will look to his dispensations and actions, and will be constrained to cry out, *Who is like unto thee?* But the grace of Faith placeth it self in the Fountain from whence these springs and sweet inundations of love do flow. Thirdly, Faith maketh Christ more precious then sense; because Faith looketh not only to what Christ is presently, but unto what Christ is from eternity before time, and what Christ shall be unto eternity after time; but sense onely doth look to what Christ is presently. And ye must conceive, that the travelling of Faith betwixt infinite love from eternity before, and infinite love from eternity after, make Faith to fall in a sea of wondering, and



raiseth the thoughts to the highest pitch of desire and estimation. Fourthly, we may likewise add, that the possession of the preciousnesse of Christ, which is shakerh upon the soul; it is not so constant, as single, as that which faith doth make. O but the gift of Faith giveth the Christian a broad look of Christ, and letteth him see Christ clothed with ornaments of Glory, and divine Majesty. Sense followeth Christ rather that it might see his Miracles; and Love that it may be fed with Loaves; but Faith followeth Christ for himself above all.

I.I. The second consideration to speak the vantage of it, is, that the grace of Faith, it hath it were, an arbitrary power with God; so that *for ever a Christian shall seek in faith, he shall receive it.* It is the noble gift that was once given to Faith, it should never seek any thing and be denied, according to that word in *Matth. 21. 21. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive it.* And that word in *Joh. 14. 7. Abide in me, that is, believe, and the promise is annexed to whatsoever ye shall ask, ye shall receive.* And it is likewise from the preceeding verse to our Text, if we obey this command of Faith, *Whatsoever ye shall ask of God, we shall receive it.* And I would deliver these two things to you from this. First, That sometimes Christ putteth a blank in a Christians hand, who is much in the exercise of Faith, according to that in *Matth. 10. 32. Is there not an ample blank put into that mans hand, What wilt thou that I should give thee?* Christ desireth him to fill up that blank with what he would. And secondly, There is sometimes which is one of the greatest steps of Christs condescendency, that oftentimes when his people have taught in their presumption a blank to be put in their hand, Christ condescendeth to give it, according to that

that strange passage in *Mark* 10. 25, 26. The two Disciples who present this desire to Christ, We desire, *That whatsoever we ask, thou shalt give it us*, and presently that is answered, *What will ye that should do for you?* Christ hath an infinite good will to satisfy the desires of his own: and that which yet more speaketh out Christs boundlesse good will, to satisfy the desire of all that belong to him; it may be cleared in that word, *Job* 16. 24. Where he charged his Disciples with this, *Hitherto* (saith he) *have I asked me nothing*; ye must not suppose that Peter, James and John never sought a suit of Christ, but the meaning of that expression is this, ye sought nothing in comparison of that which I was willing to give, which your necessity did call for at my hands, which ye should have sought.

III. There is this third consideration to point out the advantage of Faith; it is that grace that keepeth in the graces of the Spirit in life and exercise; Faith is the higher wheel, at the motion of which, all the other wheels do move; If so we may speak. Faith is the *Primum mobile*, that first moves and turns about these lower graces of the Spirit, according to that, *1 Th.* 1. 3. *Add to your faith, vertue; and to your vertue, patience; and to your patience, brotherly kindness.* First, The grace of Faith keepeth in exercise the grace of Love, as is clear, *Eph.* 3. 17. where these two graces are conjoynd: As likewise from *Rom.* 5. 2. compared with *vers.* 1. *Being justified by Faith*. Then the effect followeth upon it, *The law of God is shed abroad in our hearts*; And so it is certain, that Faith keepeth Love in life. Faith (being the spy of the heart, and that Intelligencer and precious Messenger) speaketh out, and bringeth in objects unto Love, Faith putteth aside the veil, and Love stretcheth down and seeth it self in the discoveries of Faith. Secondly,

The grace of Faith likewise, it keepeth the grace of Mortification in exercise: as is clear, not only Eph. 6. 6. but from 1. Job. 5. 4. *This is our whereby we overcome the world, even our faith*: it is certain, that Faith keepeth Mortification in exercise, and advanceth holiness, not only because this, that Faith is that grace that presenteth to a Christian the absolute purity and spotlesse holiness of Jesus Christ: but also because it maketh them their idols tastelesse as the white of an egge, and become unto them as their sorrowful meat. The principle of mortification is this, the discovery of the invisible vertues of Jesus Christ. That mortification which ariseth from the lovely discovery of the excellency of Jesus Christ, is most real and lasting, as these waters which riseth from the living springs are not only constant, but most deep and excellent. Thirdly, Faith likewise hath influence to mortification, as it doth take hold of that strength that is in Christ, by which a Christian is enabled to mortifie his corruptions. Fourthly, Faith likewise maketh application of the blood of Christ by which we are purified from dead works. Fifthly, Likewise the grace of Faith keepeth in exercise the grace of Humility, as is clear, Rom. 3. 27. *By the Law, (saith he) is boasting excluded? It is not by the Law of Works, but by the Law of Faith.* Sixthly, Faith keepeth in exercise the grace of joy, as Rom. 15. 13. *Now the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing*: So that ye see the property of Faith is, joy in the Holy Ghost. And certainly, the more we believe more, we should rejoyce more. Seventhly, and lastly, Faith keepeth in exercise the grace of hope, for it is impossible for hope to be in lively exercise except Faith once be exercised: which may I shew unto you, for how can we hope to attain unto the

thing that is promised, except our faith first close with the promise? So there is this difference between the grace of Faith, and the grace of Hope: the grace of Faith closeth with the promises, but the grace of Hope, it closeth with the thing that is promised.

V. There is this fourth Consideration, that may shew out the excellency of the grace of Faith; It is that grace, by which a Christian doth attain to most intimate fellowship, and constant correspondency with heaven. Would ye have that question resolved and determined, *What is the best way, Not to stir up an angry man, nor awake him until he please?* It is this, to dwell in the grace of Faith: this is clear from *John 3. 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by Faith*: By the exercise of all other graces, Christ is but a sojourner, *Thou turnest aside to carry but for a night*; but by the exercise of this grace, he cometh to sit up house with us. I will tell you what Faith is.

It is a ladder that reacheth betwixt heaven and earth: by the steps of which, a Christian doth ascend up to heaven and converse with the higher Angels: this is that grace, (as the Apostle speaketh) by which we have access to the Throne of his grace: and it is that which putteth others in the Believer to the Throne: and when he cannot have access there, nor joy when he is there.

V. Here is this advantage that attendeth the exercise of Faith; A believing Christian is a praying Christian: according to that word in *Mark 9. 24. Where these two are conjoynd together, Lord, I believe: and then he falleth to his prayer, saying, O Lord, I believe: help thou my unbelief.* And it is clear from *Psal. 63. 1. O God thou art my God, I will seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee.* And since Faith is a most impatient grace: but we may say of it, that it is a most diligent grace. On

is it not the neglect of this precious exercise of  
and of the duty of secret Prayer, that makes our  
selfe trillike to our Face, and maketh our soules  
barren wilderness? I am perswaded of this, (since  
Christ had any followers, and since ever  
everlasting Gospel was preached in Paradise)  
exercise of secret prayer was never so much neglected.  
We have turned over all our prayers into com-  
ments with God. We know not what it is to  
mid-night and call upon God; and to inquire after  
Maker under the silent watches of the night. O but  
is a sweet diversion from sleep, to retire our  
(in the silent seasons of the night) from all things  
about worldly matters, and to converse with the  
visible Majesty.

V I. There is this sixth consideration to point  
the advantage of Faith: That Faith is that  
that doth facilitate a Christians obedience,  
maketh it most pleasant and easie; This is clear  
Hab. 2. 1. 3. By faith Abraham, when commanded  
to a strange land, obeyed, and went out, not know-  
whether he went: The word may be rendered,  
did cheerfully obey. And ver. 17. By faith he  
up his only Son. Would ye know the reason why  
commands are your burden, and why his precepts  
your crosses? It is because of this, Ye do not believe.  
And so it is most certain, that it is impossible for  
Christian to attain to a pleasant way of obedience  
without the exercise of Faith. Faith holdeth up  
Crown to a Christian, and this crown maketh  
to obey. Faith gathereth strength from Christ,  
that strength maketh obedience very easie.  
taketh up the excellency of Christ, and this maketh  
a Christian to look upon his duty, more as his  
nity, then his duty. And we are perswaded of  
that our chariot wheel should move more so

opened up.

(like the chariots of Ammah) if we were more in the exercise of the grace of Faith. Would ye know the answer to that question, What is the first most requisite for a Christian while here below? Faith; and what secondly is most requisite Faith; And what thirdly is most requisite for a Christian? even Faith. Faith above all things, and above all things, Faith.

VII. There is another advantage of it, that by Faith our service and prayers are accepted of God. Would ye know what is the prayer of a Christian? It is not in Faith? Is it a smother in his nostrils, and it is for that burneth all the day. The unbelievers sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord. This is clear from Heb. 11. 4. By faith Abel offered up unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain; and we conceive that there are many unanswered prayers which we do put up, because we want that noble exercise of Faith.

VIII. And lastly, we shall likewise add this, that Faith is the grace by which a Christian hath the perfect and immediate sight (as it were) of great things that are promised to him; Faith bringeth a Christian within sight of Heaven, and Faith bringeth a Christian within sight of God; according to that Heb. 11. 1. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, and that noble paradox, that is said of Faith, Heb. 11. 27. By faith Moses saw him that is invisible. It is an impossible thing, to see that, which cannot be seen? But the meaning of it is this, That the discoveries of God, are as certain and sure, as the discoveries of our bodily eyes are: Faith is an intelligent grade, yea, it is a most sure and infallible grace; What will Faith not do? And what can ye who want Faith?

Now to enforce the advantages and great uses of Faith, I shall more, we shall propose to you the third advantage of this wofull sin of unbelief.

I. There is this disadvantage of the sin of unbelief, that all the actions that proceed from an unbeliever, they are impure and defiled, according to that in *Tit. 1. 15.* But unto them that are defiled, and believing is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled. Their prayer is unclean: yea (*Solomon speaketh*) their plowing is sin: yea the going about the most excellent duties (for man is an abomination to God, according to that *W. Rom. 14. 23.* What ever is not of faith, is sin. So want of Faith is the great polluter of all our actions and of all our performances.

II. There is this second disadvantage of unbelief, that it is impossible for one in the exercise of unbelief, to mortifie a lust or idol: and we may Iude unto these words in *Matth. 17. 20.* When disciples came to him and asked this question, *could we not cast out this devil?* That was given an answer, *because of your unbelief:* Unbelief is which taketh up arms for our idols; and doth strongly defend them: for there is nothing that kill corruption so much, as the exercise of faith: when that is laid aside, we have laid by our weapons and have in a manner concluded a treaty of peace with our idols, that we shall not offend them, if they offend not us.

III. There is this disadvantage that waiteth on the sin of unbelief, that such an one cannot nor attain to the grace of establishment, but is as the waves of the sea, tossed to and fro, untill one win to the exercise of Faith, as is clear from *Isa. 53. 1.* *Except ye believe, ye shall not be established.*

IV. There is this disadvantage that waiteth it, it is the mother of hardnesse and stupid heart, according to that word in *Mark 16. 14.* *He upbraided them because of their unbelief,*



that danger followeth, to wit, *hardnesse of heart*, this is clear also from *Act. 13. 9.* Where these two sisters are conjoynd and locked together, *unbelief* and *hardnesse of heart*, because it is unbelief indeed, that hindereth all the graces, by which the grace of *hardnesse* must be maintained.

V. There is this disadvantage in the sin of unbelief, that it is big with childe of apostacy from God, and of defection from him, according to that word *Job. 3. 12. Beware lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief* (and there the fruit of it) *to depart from the living God.* And certainly it is no wonder, that unbelief travel in birth, till that cursed childe of apostacy be brought forth; not onely because of this, that an unbeliever loseth the thoughts of the excellency of Christ, but also because he increaseth in his thoughts of love towards his idols; for Christ doth decrease in those who misbelieve, and their idols do increase in their love, and in their desires, and in their estimation.

VI. There is this sixth disadvantage in the sin of unbelief, it hindereth the communication of many small workings and tokens of the love and favour of the most High, according to that sad word that is in *Mat. 13. 12. at the close, He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.* Unbelief, as we saw, laid a restraint on Christ, that he could not shew these things which he was willing to perform. And (to shut up our discourse at this time) I would only add these two aggravations, which may somewhat enforce what we have spoken. (I say) there are these two aggravations in the sin of unbelief, even in his own who have a right (and also his) to believe: 1. That after Christ hath given so sensible discoveries of himself, *Quare ye doubt of him,* as it were, *facta est ratio,* yet we will not believe.

## *The Mystery of Faith*

believe: this is clear from *Job. 6. 26. Though ye see me, saith Christ, yet ye do not believe in me.* This is not a manifestation of Christ's presence, but it is a witness against you, because of your unbelief. Would ye hear the voice of sense, that is rectified? It is this, believe on the Son of God. Secondly, That notwithstanding of the signal demonstration of the power of Christ, yet, though it were the mortifying of some lust and idol within them, yet they will not believe, but upon new temptations will doubt his love to them. Christ preacheth faith by his Word. He preacheth faith by his sufferings, He preacheth faith by his dispensations, He preacheth faith by his promises, he preacheth faith by his rods, and if these five instruments will not ingage your hearts to believe, what can move them? Do not his two wounds in his precious hands, preach out this point of Faith? *Believe him?* Doth not that hole opened in his side preach this Doctrine, *That we should believe in him?* And these two wounds, that he received in his precious feet, do they not preach this, *That we should believe on a crucified Saviour?* And we would say this, that sometime it is the case of his own people, after the convictions of this, that it is their duty to believe, and also after some desires to close with Christ, yet they find inability to close with him. Is it not certain that to will (*to believe*) is sometimes present with you: but how to perform ye know not? And I would have a Christian making a fourfold use of such a dispensation as that, (which is most ordinarily) when convictions of our duty follow, and some desires to close with Christ, that it be followed with actual performances.

1. To study to have your convictions more deeply rooted within you; for it doth sometimes follow that resolutions and intents to believe, are not

*opened up.*

that should believing, because the conviction of our  
own unbelief, is not deeply imprinted upon your  
conscience.

1. Be convinced of that desperate enmity (and  
mystery of iniquity) that is within you, that ye  
are sometimes will to do, without ability to perform.  
We confess, it is not an ordinary disease in these  
times, to have such a contrariety betwixt a Christian's  
will and his practice, our will for the most part being  
better then our practice; But sometime it is, which  
may make you cry forth, *O wretched man that I am,  
who shall deliver me from this body of death.*

That ye would be much in the employing of  
Christ, that as he hath given you to will, so also he  
ought to make you to do. Christ is about to convince  
us now in such a dispensation as that, *That faith is the  
gift of God*: Faith is so noble a grace, that it can-  
not be pinned out from our resolutions, nor from  
our endeavours; Faith is such a divine plant, as the  
word of God *must plant in our souls.*

Let it convince you of the excellency of the grace  
of Faith (for the difficulty of attaining to any thing  
that speak out the excellency of that thing) there is  
no doubt it may be easily won at. There is an easi-  
ness and facility to overtake the paths of our idols:  
but the graces of the Spirit are so excellent things, that  
we must fight before we attain them. And you who  
are strangers to Christ Jesus (and have never known  
what it is to close with him) we would request you  
to take Christs Name to be reconciled to him. What know  
ye? O men, (or rather Atheists) but this shall be  
my last summons that ye shall see to believe: And  
because ye disobey this precious summons, there  
shall be one presented to you that ye cannot see. I  
remember of one man, who look'd up upon a vision  
that were under his command, started over  
them,

## *The Mystery of Faith*

when he considered how that within a few  
years all these should be laid in their graves, and then  
be in eternity. O but it were much of our con-  
science, to be trying our selves how it is with us.  
We are not afraid that it is a breach of charity, to  
say that but one of each ten that are within these do  
were heirs of the grace of life, and had the solide  
spiritual expectation of heaven. I think, if Ch-  
rist were to come presently to speak to us; he might  
only say to each twelve that are here, *One of you  
shall betray me: but we are afraid, that he would say  
to each twelve that are here, 'Eleven of you shall betray  
me, and but one only shall passe free. O doth it not  
concern you, to enquire where ye shall rest at night,  
in the long shadows of the everlasting evening that  
is stretched out upon you? I think there are some,  
that are so settled upon their lies, that if they were  
day in hell, and saw all the torments that are  
and were brought from it the next day to live  
on earth, they would not repent. And more, there  
are some, that take them up one day to see the joy  
of heaven, and bring them back again, they would  
pursue after these blessed and everlasting enjoyments.  
O is not Christ much undervalued by us? But I  
will tell you this, *One work is past, but behold another  
is coming. O the sore sighing of these spirits that  
are entered into their everlasting prison house, out  
of which there is no redemption. What shall be  
the choice, when Christ shall come in the clouds? I  
am perswaded there are many, to whom at that day,  
the Doctrine would be ravishing, viz. That there were  
no death, that there were not a God, and that there  
was no eternity. Oh I will ye believe, That the  
Justice of God is buried in heaven, and shall  
come down to make a sacrifice, not in the land of Idum-  
ea, nor in the land of Bozra; but he is to make a sac-**

opened up.

among his people, who seemed so make a Covenant with him by sacrifice. Ah, ah, shall we say that? If their argument were used so many, that within forty dayes they should be at their long and everlasting home, they would yet spend thirty nine of these dayes in taking pleasure upon their lusts. I am perswaded of this, that there are many who think that the way betwixt heaven and earth is but one dayes journey; they think they can believe in one day, and triumph at night. But O! it shall be a short triumphing that such believers as these shall have. Therefore, O study to close with a crucified Saviour, rest on him by faith, delight your selves in him with love, and let your hearts be longing for the day when your voice shall be heard in heaven (and O how sweet shall it be sung.) Arise, arise, arise, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away: for behold your winter is past, your cruel winter is come, and the time of the singing of birds is near. When Christ shall come over these mountains of Beiter, he shall cry, Behold I come; and the four shall sweetly answer, Come, Blessed Lord, Come, Come. O what a life shall it be! that with these two arms ye should eternally incircle Christ, and hold him in your armes, or rather be incircled by him! Wait for him, for he shall come, and his reward is with him, and he shall once take home the weary travellers of hope.

SER

## SERMON IV.

*1. Joh. 3. 23. This is his Commandment  
that ye should believe on the Name of  
San Iesus Christ, &c.*

**T**HERE are two great and excellent gifts  
which God in the depth of his bounty  
has bestowed on his own. The first  
is that infinite gift and royal  
anointment, his own beloved Son, Iesus Christ, which  
is called, *The gift of God*, 3. Jo. 4. 10. And secondly  
There is that excellent gift of the grace of Faith  
which God hath bestowed upon his own, which  
is also called, *The gift of God*, Ephes. 2. 8. *For  
the gift of God*. And is it not certain, that these  
two precious gifts ought to engage our souls  
in such a manner unto him? Infinite Majesty could  
bestow no gift greater nor his Son, and infinite poverty  
receive, no other gift so humble as Christ; It is  
the most noble gift that heaven could give, and  
the greatest advantage for earth to receive it. And  
could withstanding the most part of the study and  
labour of men (that is spent in pursuit after these  
and transient vanities) might be once taken up  
to that precious pursuit after Christ. We could  
turn all the questions and debates of the time  
over into that soul concerning question, *What  
shall we do to be saved?* And that all the questions  
and contentions of the time were turned  
over into that divine contention and heavenly debate  
of *What should be most for Christ, who should be most for  
Christ, and what should be the noble and excellent plant of renovation?*

all our judgments and searchings of other men's  
 lives and estate might be turned over into that  
 useful search, to prove and examine our selves whether  
 we be in the faith or not. And I would ask you this  
 question, what are your thoughts concerning Jesus  
 Christ, seeing he is that noble object of Faith?  
 We would only have you taking along these things,  
 by which Christ may be much commended to you.  
 First, There was never any that with the  
 eyes of Faith did behold the matchless beauty and  
 transcendent worth of that crucified Saviour, that re-  
 deemed his enemy. There is soul conquering virtue  
 in the face of Christ, and there is a heart captivating  
 and overcoming power in the beauty of Jesus Christ.  
 This bright light that ever persecuting Saul got of  
 Christ, it brought him unto an endless captivity of  
 love. Secondly, There is this that we would say of  
 Jesus Christ, which may engage our souls unto him,  
 as for all the wrongs Believers do to Christ, yet hath  
 he never an evil word of them to his Father, but com-  
 mends them: which is clear from that of Job 27. 6,  
 where Christ doth commend the Disciples to the Fa-  
 ther for the grace of obedience, *They have loved my  
 word:* and for the grace of Faith, ver. 8. *They have  
 believed that thou dost send me:* and yet were not the  
 Disciples most defective in obedience, both in this,  
*That they did not take up their cross and follow Christ,*  
 and also in that, they did not adhere to him in the day  
 when he was brought to Caiaphas hall: and were they  
 not most defective in the grace of Faith? as it clear  
 from Matth. 27. 17. and likewise from Job 14. 1.  
 He is pressing them to believe in him, and yet he doth  
 commend them to the Father, as most perfect in their  
 faith. Thirdly, There is that too we would say  
 of him who is the noble object of Faith, look to  
 the eminent depths of Christs benevolency, and then



## *The Mystery of Faith*

then ye will be provoked to love him. Was it not infinite love that made Christ to ly three dayes in a grave, that we might be through all the ages of our life with him? Was it not infinite condescension that made his precious Head wear a crown of thorns, that we might eternally wear a crown of Glory? Was it not infinite condescendency that made Christ wear a purple robe, that so we might wear that precious robe of the righteousness of the Saints? Was it not matchlesse condescendency, that Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, and like unto us, that so we might become like unto him, and be made the righteousness of God in him.

But to come to that which we intend mainly to speak upon at this time, which is that second thing that we proposed to speak of from these words: and that concerning the excellency of this grace of Faith, which we cleared was holden in out that, that faith was called his commandment, which is so called by way of eminency and excellency. There are many things in Scripture, which may sweetly point out the precious excellency of this grace of Faith, but we shall only speak to these things.

1. The first thing that speaketh out the excellency of Faith is this, it exerciseth it self upon a most noble Object (to wit Jesus Christ) Faith and Christ being the two arms of the immortal Soul, by which we do embrace a crucified Saviour, which is so painted at in Scripture: and we shall point at three principall acts of Faith, which it exerciseth upon Jesus Christ as the object of it.

The first is, to make up an Union between Christ and the Believer (Faith being indeed an embracing grace, and that which kniteth the members to the head) and to make this more fully appear, we would point out a little what sweet Harmony and

respondency there is betwixt these two sister graces, (to wit) faith and love. Faith is that nail, which fasteneth the soul to Christ, and love is that grace which driveth that nail to the head; Faith at first taketh but a tender grip of Christ, and then love cometh in, and maketh the soul take a more sure grip of him. Secondly, Ye may see that harmony in this, Faith is that grace which taketh hold (as it were) of the garments of Christ, and of his words; but love (that ambitious grace) it taketh hold of the heart of Christ, and, as it were, his heart doth melt in the hand of love. Thirdly, It may be seen in this, Faith is that grace, which draweth the first draught of the likenesse and image of Christ upon a soul, but that (accomplishing) grace of love, it doth compleat these first draughts and these imperfect lineaments of Christ's Image, which were first drawn on the soul. Fourthly, by faith and love the heart of Christ and of the Believer are so united, that they are no more two, but one Spirit.

2. There is this second act that Faith exerciseth on Christ, and it is in discovering the matchlesse excellencies, and the transcendent properties of Jesus Christ. O what large and precious commendations doth faith make upon Christ? It is indeed that faith which spy, which doth alwayes bring up a good report of him. Hence it is, that faith is called *understanding*, Colos. 2. 2. Because it is that grace, which revealeth unto us of the precious truth of that noble Object.

3. And there is this third noble act of Faith, exposing it self upon Christ, viz. It maketh Christ precious to the soul according to that word, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *Unto you that believe, he is precious.* And if there were no other thing to speak forth his worth, but that he were then sufficient: for no doubt this is the privilege of the higher House, to be dwelling in the contemplation of Christ's beauty, and to have their

souls transported with love towards him; and joy in him. Reason and amittment are fellow companions, but here they do sweetly joy together. First a Christian loveth Christ, because of his actions, and then he loveth all these things because they come from Christ.

II. Now secondly, this pointeth out the pre-excellency of the grace of Faith. It is that grace which is most mysterious and sublime in its actions, in a more divine and sublime way of acting than other grace. Hence it is called, *The mystery of Faith*, which speaketh this, that the actions of Faith are mysteries to the most part of the world, and I only point at these things which may speak of the mysterious actions of the grace of Faith.

1. Faith can believe, and fix it self on a word of promise, although sense, reason and probability seem to contradict the accomplishment of that promise. Faith is walketh not by the low dictation of sense and reason; but by a higher rule, (to wit) the sure word of promise, which is clear from Rom. 4. 19. Where Abraham believed the promise, notwithstanding that sense and reason seemed to contradict it: He considered not the landness of his own body, neither the barrenness of Sarahs womb; but was strong in the forgiving glory to God. As it is clear from Heb. 11. 19. Where Faith believed their passing through the Red Sea through dry ground, which was most contrary to sense and reason. Faith believed the falling down the walls of Jericho, by the blowing of ramshorn. Which things are most impossible to sense and reason. For sense will oftentimes cry out, *Alas how are these things possible?* And reason will say, *How can such a thing be?* But yet that Heroick grace of Faith cryeth out, *What is impossible? There it shall come to passe.*

2. Faith can believe a word of promise, even when it is

holding that the dispensations of God seem to con-  
flict; as was clear in Job, who professed, *I  
believe in God, though he should kill me.* And in  
fact, but this was the practice of believing Jacob,  
who stated that that promise should be accomplished,  
that the elder should serve the younger; though all the  
dispensations of God, (which he did meet with)  
seemed to say, that promise should not be accom-

Faith can believe a word of promise, even when  
Commands of God seem to contradict the accom-  
plishment of that promise : This is clear in that sin-  
gle instance of *Abrahams* faith, that notwithstanding  
he was commanded to kill his promised seed,  
upon whom he did depend the accomplishment of  
promises ; yet he believed that the promise  
should be performed. And though there were in-  
numerable extraordinary and strange trials of his faith, as  
his natural affections to wrestle with, yet over-  
coming all these, believing Abraham, he giveth  
him to the promise, and bringeth him back again ; this is  
clear from Heb. 11. 17, 18, 19.

Faith can exercise it self upon the promise, notwithstanding that challenges and convictions of work, shame and guilt do wair on the Christian: Thus *2 Sam. 23. 5.* That although his *body was weary with God as did become*, yet he believed the promise. As likewise it is clear from *Psal. 6. 7.* That although he was *troubled against me*: and yet that doth not hinder his Faith, but he saith, *As for me, I have hoped in thy mercy, O Lord, therefore say not thou, I have sinned.* And certainly, it were a weak and precious act of Faith to believe, notwithstanding of unanswerable challenges of guilt: that we both to crucifie our Doubts, and to answer our challenges, by believing, and saying, *As the Lord said.*

## The Mystery of Faith

and closing with Christ. This is most clearly seen, if compared with ver. 8, where after the challenges, the prophet hath a strange word, *now, O Lord, thou art my Father.* There is a *now* in the word (*now*) for all this, *Thou art my Father.*

3. And lastly, this pointeth out the mystery of the grace of Faith, that it exerciseth upon an invisible object, even upon Christ himself, according to that word, *1 Pet. 1. 8. Having not seen, yet ye love, in whom though now ye see not, yet believing, &c.* I praise the greater you who are here, whether or not there be the greatest Paradoxes and mysteries unto you, is not this a mystery, to love him whom we *see not*? *Whom having not seen, yet ye love:* To believe and unseen Christ, is a mystery to the rest of the world: and is not this a mystery, to love on him whom we never saw? *In whom, ye see him not, yet believing.* And I shall add that Faith can hold fast its interest with God, notwithstanding the most precious Christian though hypocrites, and not acknowledge us, this is in the promise of Job 3. And most clear from word, *Isa. 63. 16. Doubtlesse thou art our Father though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not.*

4. Thirdly, this pointeth out the exercise of the grace of Faith, that Faith, (when it is exercised) is that grace by which a Christian doth attain unto most sensible enjoyments. There is a question that is much debated among Christians, what is the way to win this happy knowledge, never ending the sweet and satisfying communion, how to have his dew always coming down upon our branches? I can give no answer to

opened up.

as much in the exercise of Faith. The  
from that notion and name put upon Faith.  
It is called a look to Christ, which is  
indefeasible. If ye would know a true  
of Faith, it is this, The divine contemplation  
of the immortal soul, upon that divine, excellent, and  
ever object, Jesus Christ. For God never made  
a liar, and therefore its eye is never off him  
the noble object of Faith, Jesus Christ men-  
tioned in the Gospel; as it is clear, *John. 1. 13*  
ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit  
of promise, which preacheth out the excellent  
things whose had after their closing with  
who is invisible. Our Faith is called a seal  
which speaketh out this, that Faiths sight of  
is as certain as if we did behold him with our  
eye, as it is clear, *Heb. 11. 27. Moses saw him by  
faith who is invisible.* And we conceive that the  
which maketh the most part of us here  
complacent, *How long will thou forget us?*  
It is this, the want of the spiritual sense  
of Faith; and are there not some here who  
cry out, *It is more then thirty days since I saw  
the King*; Yes, there are some who say so  
greater length, and cry out, *I have lived three  
years at Jerusalem, and yet I have not seen  
his face*. Yes, there are some that say  
they may go a little higher, and cry out,  
*Three years and six months is past, and yet I  
have not seen him*; but the clouds have been raised, and  
the heavens have become clear, and  
ye know the rise of this complaining  
soreness much in the darkness of the  
heart. And to you, I would say, that  
it is better to be in the state of  
Faith, than to be in the state of  
unbelief.

that they are wanting to God in their Faith; they hold fast that piece of desperate iniquity they die. Secondly, We would say to these of you who have the valley of Achor for a door of hope, and have tasted of the sweetness of Christ, so of you will be less convinced, for the neglect of the duty of Faith, then for neglect of the duty of Prayer, or of the duty of keeping the Sabbath day. But I am perswaded of this, if the noble worth of that transcendent object were known, we would have a holy impatience until once we did believe.

IV. Fourthly, This also pointeth out the excellency of the grace of Faith, It is that grace which a Christian is advanced to the highest and most inconvertible pitch of dignity, and that To be the child of the living God: As is clear Job. 1. 12. *To as many as received (in believing him) he gave power or prerogative to become the child of God.* And certainly that noble prerogative Adoption is much undervalued by many: As will tell you two grounds whereon the most wise men undervalue that excellent gift of Adoption: First, They do not take up the infinite height of God (and what a one He is) otherwise they would cry out with David, *Seemeth it a small thing in your eyes to be a son to the King of Kings?* Secondly, We do not take up, nor understand these matchlesse Priviledges which are given them who are once in this estate, I am perswaded, if this were believed, that he who is a servant doth not abide in the house for ever, (though he is a Son doth) it would stir us up to more diligent zeal in our pursuit after faith.

V. Fifthly, This likewise pointeth out the excellency of the grace of Faith, it is that grace, which all other actions are pleasant to God,



taken off our hand, as is clear, *Heb. 11. 4.* *Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,* which must be understood even of all our duties. And that word, *without*, it is impossible to please God, speaks both also, by faith we do exceedingly please him. And is a most sad and lamentable reproof unto many who are here, that their actions do not please him, because they are not in Faith. Would you have a description of your prayers? (ye who are hypocrites, and destitute of the knowledge of God) It is this, Your prayers are the breach of the Command, *In taking the Name of the Lord our God, for which he will not hold you guiltless.* And would ye know what is your hearing of Sermons? It is an abomination to the Lord, according to that which is in *Tir. 1. 15.* *To the unbelieving and impure, the word is clean.* And as Solomon doth speak, *The way of the wicked is sin:* So that all your actions that ye go about, are but an offence to the Majesty of the Lord.

Now we would speak to these two things before we proceed to the evidences of faith (to wit) That there is a difference betwixt the direct act of Faith, and the reflecting act of Faith, there may be a direct act of Faith in a Christian, when he is not perswaded that he doth believe, but the reflecting acts of faith are these, when a Christian hath, when he is perswaded in his conscience that he doth believe. And we would finally say, that there are many that go down to their grave under that soul-destroying delusion, that they are in faith, and yet never did know what faith is: I am perswaded, there are many that all the preachings in the world will never convince, that they did never believe, their faith was born with them, and it will die with them, without

## (The Mystery of Faith

without any fruit. But faith being such an excellent grace, and so advantageous (whereof have been a few things) we shall speak a little further of it. First, in pointing out some evidences, by which a Christian may know whether or not he be indeed in the Faith. Secondly, I will give you some helps whereby Faith may be kepted in exercise.

1. Now there is this first evidence of faith, that a Christian who doth believe, be accounted the sense and want of fellowship with Christ, communion with him, one of the greatest and lamentable crosses that ever he had: as is clear *Psalm 13. 3. Lighten mine eyes, saith David, is, Let me behold and be satisfied with thy face:* the motive that he backeth it with is this, *Let me sleep the sleep of death.* David thought himself a dead man, if Christ did withdraw his presence from him. Also it is clear, *Can. 3. 1.* (compared to the following verses) where absence from Christ and want of communion with him, was the greatest cross the Spouse had: and it is clear from *20. 11, 12, 13.* where *Mary* had a holy disdain of all things, in respect and comparison of Christ. But I will tell you what a hypocrite doth lament, and that is, the want of reparation among the Saints: that is the great god, and idol among hypocrites, and that which (when not enjoyed by hypocrites and atheists lament most, the more the lust of their eyes: when they want it, when they cry out, *They have taken away my gods, what have I more?* They think heaven can make up the loss of earth. And certainly, if any of us would examine our selves by this, we should find our selves most defective. I would pray you who are here, who have taken on a new name, be followers of Christ, whether or not

content to walk thirty dayes in absence from  
 Christ, and yet never to lament it? Hath not Christ  
 thirty dayes and more in heaven, without a vi-  
 sion of you? And yet for all this, ye have not clothed  
 yourselves with sackcloth. I will not say that this  
 is undeniable evidence of the total want of the  
 love of Faith; but it doth eminently prove this,  
 that the person who hath come this length, hath lo-  
 sed his primitive love, and much of that high  
 love which he ought to have of matchlesse Christ:  
 Can you find in this world, that maketh you  
 so little with heaven? I think that it is the  
 encouragement of a Christian, when he is go-  
 ing down to his grave, that he hath this wherewith  
 to comfort himself, *I am to change my place, but not  
 my company*; death to the believing Christian being a  
 transition and transportation to a more im-  
 mediate, constant and uninterrupted enjoyment of  
 Christ. But I believe, that if all who have the name of  
 Christians in this generation, should go to heaven, they  
 should have this to say, I am now not only to change  
 place, but also my company. For these seventy  
 years I have been conversant with my idols, but  
 now I am to converse with more blessed, divine, and  
 glorious company: O that ye might be perswaded  
 to come much after an absent Christ. Were it not a  
 period of our life, to breath out our last breath  
 in sin, and to be living in the faith of being  
 justified by Christ, which might be founded upon

This is this second evidence of one that is in-  
 sincere. They do endeavour to advance that  
 work of the mortification of their idols accord-  
 ing to that word, *1 Joh. 3. 4. Every man that hath  
 the love in him, purifieth himself even as he has pur-  
 posed. 1. 9. Faith is purifieth the heart. And con-*

cerning this evidence ( lest any should mistake ) I would say these things to you. First, The mortification of a Christian, as long as he is here below doth more consist in resolutions than attainments. It is certain, that there are high attainments of a Christian in the mortifications of his idols, but his resolutions go far above his performances. Secondly, I would say this, That those Christians who are come this length in Christianity, to make the universal conclusion, and full resolution, *What I do do any more with idols?* They may suspect themselves, that they are not in the Faith: for a Christian that is in Christ, he is universal in resolutions, though he be not so in practice, but defective in performances. A Christian may have big resolutions and weak performances; for resolution will be at the gate of heaven, before practice come from the bottom of hell; there being a long distance betwixt resolution and practice; and the one much swifter than the other. And thirdly, We would likewise say, ye who never did know what it was to endeavour in prayer and the exercise of other duties, the mortification of your lusts and idols; ye may be afraid, ye have not yet the hope of seeing him as he is. I would say this to many, who are settled upon their idols, and who never did know what it was to spend one hour in secret prayer for mortifying an idol. they would beware lest that curse be cast in against them; *I would have purged you, and ye were not purged, therefore ye shall not be purged, till you die*; that iniquity of refusing to come with Christ in the work of secret mortification, *that iniquity shall not be purged away*. And we once seriously desire you, by that dreadful love that Christ shall passe against you, and by that love ye have to your immortal souls, and by the power

everlasting torments of hell, that ye would seriously set about the work of spiritual mortification; so ye may evidence that ye have believed, and that ye have the soul-comforting hope of eternal life. I will onely speak this one word to you, (and desire ye seriously to ponder it-) What if within twelve months hereafter a summons were given to you (with-  
out continuation of dayes) to compare before the so-  
vereign and dreadful Tribunal of that impartial Judge, Je-  
sus Christ: What suppose ye, would be your thoughts? If ye examine your own conscience, what ye think  
would be your thoughts, if such summons were  
presented unto you. I am perswaded of this, *That your*  
*conscience would smite one against another, and your face*  
*would gather palensse, seeing your conscience would*  
*reproove you, That ye had been weighed in the ballance*  
*and found light:* O think ye that ye can both fight and  
rest in one day? Think ye that ye can fight and  
rest in one day? Think ye your lusts and un-  
purged corruptions so weak and faint hearted an-  
y more, that upon the first appearance of such im-  
aginary champions (as most part of us are in our  
eyes) that your idols would lay down arms and  
trample on them? Believe me, mortification is  
the work of one day, or one year, but it is a work  
that will serve you all your time, begin as soon as ye will:  
Therefore seeing you have spent your dayes in  
the service of the flesh, it is time that now ye would  
turn and pursue after him, whose works is with  
the Father, and whose reward shall come before him.

Now there is this third evidence, by which a  
man may know whether he be in the Faith or  
not, that Christ is matchlesse and incom-  
parable unto such an one, according to that word  
in Luke 7. *To you that believe Christ is precious, and*  
*that Luke hath in his 7. Chap. in the 10. Verse,*

*That he to whom much was forgiven, loved much.* lest this likewise should prove a discouragement to any, I would only have you taking notice of that a Christian may be a Believer, and yet was sensible discoveries of this, that Christ is most precious to him: but this is certain, that they are in the lively exercise of Faith, it is impossible for them not to esteem Christ matchlesse. I would speak this likewise to many who are. Have ye not been living these ten years in Faith, I would pose you with this, Esteem ye not your more matchlesse then Christ, and more of worth be? It is impossible that there can be any lively exercise of Faith, and not esteem Christ matchlesse. It is not to say it with your mouth, and contrary with your heart will do the businesse: For if hearts could speak, it would say, I would sell *forty pieces of Silver*: But my idols would be no rare. Are there not many of you who love the world and its pleasures better nor the eternity of God? Oh, know ye not that word (O ye desperately rant of the Truths of God) *That he who loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*: And notwithstanding of the light of the word, ye sell your immortal souls (with *Esau*) For a *bag of Potage*: O but it is a poor bargain when ye sell the eternity of joy for a passing world, and its transitory delights! I would earnestly know what shall be your thoughts in that day, when ye shall stand upon the utmost line betwixt time and eternity. O what will be your thoughts at that day when you are to follow on to an endless pain, (by *the* *ancient*) and then ye are to leave your idols. I heartily desire, that ye may read the word, *Isa. 60.* *will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the day which shall come from far? To whom will ye*

and where will ye leave your glory; Ye shall receive much mortification to the life; though all the exercise of mortification shall be then cut off. O but to a worldly minded man, when eternity of pain is set before him in the face, (preach out concerning the vanity of this world) might it not persuade you that the world is a fancy and a dream that shall fly away, and shall leave you in the day of your greatest straits.

V. And there is the fourth evidence of Faith, in a Christian, who doth truly believe, he is that Christian who entertaineth a divine jealousy and a suspicion of himself, whether or not he doth believe; I love not that faith which is void of fear, but is clear in the practice of believing Now, that Noah by faith he built the Ark, yet he had fear mixed with his faith. I know that there are some who are ignorant concerning this, what it is to doubt concerning eternal peace; and more, it is not every one that doubteth, that certainly shall get heaven; for I know a hypocrite may doubt concerning his eternal salvation; however, I think the exercise of a hypocrite under his doubtings, it is more the exercise of judgement, then the exercise of his conscience; I may say, That if all the exercise of the Law which is preached in these dayes were narrowly considered, it would be more the exercise of sight, then the exercise of conscience. We speak these things as if they were which never was our exercise, and we make these things our publick exercise which was our private and chamber exercise. And I think, if all that a Christian did speak to God in prayer, was his exercise, he would speak lesse, and would be more silent. We would be speechlesse when we go to God, when if we did speak nothing but our exercise, we would have nothing to say. And certainly it is so that often we fall into that woful sin, of despoiling



*And lying against the holy Ghost by flattering God in our mouth, and lying unto him with our tongue.* And I shall only say these two words, There are some who have this for their great design, viz. they would be at peace with their conscience, and also they would be at peace with their idols, they would reconcile conscience and their idols together, that is their great design. And there are some whose design is a little more refined, they study rather to be reconciled with their conscience, then to be reconciled with God; Their great aim they shoot at is this, to have their conscience quieted, though they know not what it is to have the soul comforting peace of God to themselves.

V. Now, There is this last evidence of Faith. That justifying Faith is a Faith which putteth the Christian to be much in the exercise of these duties by which it may be maintained, for we must keep it as the apple of our eye: And for that end, I would lay down to you these three things, by which Faith may be kept in exercise; and a real Christian will be endeavouring in some measure to attain unto them.

I. It keepeth Faith much in exercise, to be much in marking and taking notice of the divine excellencies and proofs of the love of God, wherewith a Christian doth meet, as is clear from that word in Rom. 12. 10. *Experience worketh hope.* I durst be bold to say that the most part that are indeed in Christ, think that they are too little in remarking and taking notice of the experiences of his love. Ye should mark the place of your experience, and much more ye should mark the experience it self: as is clear from Scripture that the very place where Christians did meet to have experience, in such an enjoyment of God, was marked it, Ezek. 1. 1. *By the rivers of Chebar the heavens were opened, and I saw the visions of God.*

22. 30. *Jacob called the place Peniel, the place of the face of God, after seeing of the face of God: it was so remarkable unto him. And we conceive, that ye should mark these two things mainly in your practice. Ye would mark (if ye can possibly) the first of your closing with Christ, and of your coming out of Egypt: and we may allude unto that command (if not more then allude unto it) in Deut. 16. 1. Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God: For in the month of Abib the Lord God brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And secondly, We would have you much in marking these experiences which have increased your Faith, and which have strengthened your love, and which have mortified your idols. These are experiences specially to be marked.*

Faith is kepted in exercise, and we win to the assurance of our interest in God: which we will presse upon you, by being much in the exercise of secret prayer. O but many loveth much to pray when abroad, who never loved to pray when alone. And that is a desperate sign of hypocrisie, according to that, *Matth. 6. 6.* It is said of hypocrites, *that they love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they might be seen of men:* it is never said of these persons, that they love to pray alone, only they loved to pray in Synagogues: it is secret and retired prayer, by which Faith is kepted in exercise.

And there is this likewise that we would presse upon you, that ye would be much in studying communion and fellowship with God, that is your Faith to be kepted in life. And O what a blessed life is it, each day to be taken up to the top of the Mount Pith, and there to behold that promised land, that retreshful sight of the Crown every morning.

which might make us walk with joy all along  
 day! The heart of a Christian ought to be in  
 ven, his conversation ought to be there, his eyes  
 to be there: And I know not what of a Chris-  
 ought to be out of heaven (even before his go-  
 there) save his lumpish tabernacle of clay, which  
 nor inherie incorruption till he be made incor-  
 rible. And I shall say no more but this, many of  
 are readier to betray him with a kisse, and crucifie  
 afresh, then to keep communion with him: but  
 eternally be to him by whom the Son of man is betra-  
 yed, and that doth crucifie Christ afresh: it were better  
 a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were  
 cast into the depth of the sea. I remember an expres-  
 sion of a man not two dayes ago, who (upon his  
 bed) being asked by one what he was doing,  
 most stupidly, though most truly, That he was  
 fighting with Christ: and I think that the most part  
 (if he prevent us not) shall die fighting with  
 him. But know and be perswaded, that he is too sore a  
 for us to fight with: he will once tread you in the  
 press of his fury, and he shall return with dyed gar-  
 ments from treading such of you as would not imbrace  
 him. He shall destroy you with all his beate. Therefore  
 instructed, lest his soul be disjoyned from you (as  
 word in Jer. 6. 3.) And lest your soul eternally  
 separated from him: Be instructed, I say, to close  
 him by Faith. Now to him who can do so, we desire to give praise.

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*In the two Sermons next following, you have the  
 these sweet Purposes, which the worthy Author  
 set upon the same Text: Never before Printed.*

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## S E R M O N V.

*Joh. 3. 23. This is his Commandment, that ye should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

**H**ere are two great rocks, upon which a Christian doth ordinarily dash in his way and motion toward his rest. 1. The rock of presumption and carnal confidence; so when Christ dandleth them upon his knees, and smeth them with the breasts of his consolations, maketh their cup to overflow; then they cry out, *mountain standeth strong, I shall never be moved.* 2. The rock of misbelief and discouragement; when he hideth his face, and turneth back his face of his Throne, then they cry out, *Our hope no strength is perfected from the Lord: we know what is to bear our enjoyments by humility; nor crosses by patience and submission. O hat misbelief and jealousie are bad interpreters of dark dispensations; they know not what it is to read these serious characters of divine Providence, except they be written in the legible characters of sense; a woman big with child of twins, and is travelling, she bring forth apostacy and security; and no doubt, a blessed Christian that hath overcome that world of misbelief, and doth walk by that Royal rule of the Word, and not by that changeable rule of sensations. We conceive that there are three great Serpents and Dragons of a Christian, that hindereth him from putting a blank in Christs hand concerning his going to heaven, there is pride, self-indulgence and security.*

security. Do we not covet to be more excellent than our neighbour? Do we not love to travell to be through a valley of Roses? And do we not anxiously desire to walk toward Sion, sleeping (rather than weeping) as we go? Are there not some words that we would have taken out of the Bible? The sad divinity to flesh and blood, *Through many tribulations must we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; love not to be changed from vessel to vessel, that *seems may be taken from us*.

There are three great enemies of Christ: Misbelief, Hypocrisie, and Profanity. Misbelief is bloody sin, hypocrisie is a silent sin, profanity crying sin. Those are mother evils, and I shall show you these differences betwixt them: Misbelief crucifieth Christ under the vail of humility, hypocrisie crucifieth Christ under the vail of love, and profanity putteth him to open shame. Misbelief denieth the love and power of God, hypocrisie denieth the omniscieny of God, and profanity denyeth the face of God. Misbelief is a sin that looketh after inherent righteousness, hypocrisie is a sin that looketh after external holiness onely, and profanity is a sin that looketh after heaven without holiness, breaking connexion between these things that God always separate, and separating these things which he hath always put together; So that their ends shall once prove a delusion, and flie away as a dream in the night. But let us study this excellent grace of true and saving Faith, which shall be a perfect remedy against all those Christ-destroying and destroying evils.

But now to come to that which we did promise thirdly to be spoken of from the words, which shew the sweetness of this grace of Faith; no doubt a pleasant command, and it maketh all come

opened up.

infant, it is that which casteth a divine lustre upon the most hard sayings of Christ, and maketh the Christian to cry forth, *God hath spoken in his bull,* *I will rejoyce.* We need not stand long to say that Faith is a sweet and refreshing command; it is oftentimes recorded in Scripture to the advantage of this grace, and unspeakable joy and heavenly delight are the hand-maids that wait upon it, more particularly to make it out, we shall speak of these things. The first is, That this grace giveth the Christian a broad and comprehensive sight of Christ, and maketh him to behold not only the duty of his actions, but the beauty of his person: there are these three precious sights that Faith sheweth to a Christian of Christ. First, It letteth the Christian see Christ in his absolute and personal excellency, taking him up as the eternal Son of God, the Ancient of Dayes, as the Father of Eternity, the expresse Image of His Fathers person, and the brightness of his glory, and this filleth the soul with the fear and admiration: Hence is that word, *11. 27. That we see by Faith him that is invisible.* If he had said, Faith is that grace that maketh things that are invisible, visible unto us. Secondly, It letteth the soul see Christ in his relative excellencies, that is, what he is to us; Faith taketh up Christ as a husband, and from thence we are provoked to much boldnesse and divine confidence, and shall see these rich possessions that are provided for us by our elder Brother, who was *born for adversity.* Faith taketh up Christ as a blessed *Dayes man* that *did lay his hand upon us both*: And from thence we are constrained to wonder at the condescendency of Christ, it taketh him up as dying, and as redeeming from the power of the grave, and from the hands of our enemies; and this provoketh Christians to make

make a totall and absolute resignation of themselves over unto Christ. *To serve him all the dayes of life in righteousness and holinesse.* And, this Faith maketh the soul behold these mysterious draughts of spotlesse love, those divine emanations of love that have flowed from his ancient and everlasting love since the world began. Would we know the great ground why we are so ignorant of him, who is the study of Angels, and of all that are about the Throne, it is this, we are not much in the exercise of faith. And if we would ask that question, What is the way to attain to the saving knowledge of God in Christ? we could give no answer it but this, Believe: and again believe, and again believe: Faith openeth these mysterious seals of boundlesse perfection, and in some way teacheth the Christian to answer that unanswerable question, *What is His Name, and what is his Sons Name.*

There is this secondly that pointeth out the sweetness of Faith, that it giveth an excellent relish to the promises, and maketh them food to our souls. What are all the promises without faith (as to the use) but as a dead letter that hath no life? But when exercised upon the promises, maketh a Christian cry out, *The words of his mouth are sweeter unto me then the honey and the honey comb:* as is clear from *Heb. 11. 12. 13.* It is by faith that we imbrace the promises, and do receive them.

Thirdly, The sweetness of Faith may appear in this, that it enableth a Christian to rejoyce in the most anxious and afflicting dispensations that meeteth with while he is here below; as is clear from *Rom. 5. 1. 5.* where his being justified by Faith hath this fruit attending it, *to joy in tribulation.* And likewise from *Heb. 10. 34, 35.* Doubtless Faith hold the crown in its right hand, and letteth

Christ



Christian behold these infinite dignities that are pro-  
 vided unto them, after they have, as a strong man,  
 overcome their race; And when a Christian is put into a  
 tribulation, but seven times more then ordinary, it brings  
 down the Son of man Jesus Christ, to walk with  
 him in the furnace: So that they walk safely, and  
 with joy through fire and water, and (in a manner)  
 they can have no crosse in his company. For would  
 ye know what is the description of a crosse? It is to  
 have Christ in any estate, And would ye know what  
 is the description of prosperity? It is to have Christ  
 in any condition or estate of life; What can ye want  
 if ye have him, and what can he have that want him?  
 It is that All, so that all things besides him are but  
 vanity. But beside this, Faith doth discover unto a  
 Christian, that there is a sweet period of all his trials  
 and afflictions that he can be exposed unto: To that  
 he can never say that of faith which *Abah* saith of  
*Isaiah*, He never prophesieth good things unto me,  
 but rather he may say alwayes the contrary, Faith  
 never prophesieth evil unto me, it being a grace that  
 prophesieth excellent things in the darkest night, and  
 secretly declarerth, that though weeping do endure for  
 an evening, yet joy cometh in the morning: And that,  
 though now they go forth weeping bearing precious seed,  
 yet at last they shall return rejoicing, having fruit in  
 their bosome.

And this may bring in the fourth consideration to  
 point out the sweetnesse of Faith, That it giveth a  
 Christian a refreshing sight of that land that is a fir-  
 m and maketh him to behold that inheritance that is  
 provided for the *Saints in light*: it goeth forth to the  
*Land of Esbek*, and there doth pluck down those grapes  
 that grow in *Emanuel's land*, to bring up a good re-  
 port upon that noble Countrey we are journeying to-  
 wards, and the City the streets whereof are paved  
 with

with transparent gold. And howbeit it may be a perplexing debate between many and their own souls whether or not these eyes that have been the windows through which so much uncleanness hath entered, and these species of lust have been conveyed into the heart, shall once be like the eyes of a man washed with milk and fish oil, and be admitted to that glorious object, *the Lamb that sitteth upon the Throne*: Or whether ever these tongues that have been set on fire of hell, and these polluted lips that have spoke so much against God, and Heaven, and all his People, and Interests, shall ever be admitted to sing these heavenly *Hallelujahs* amongst that select society of Angels, and that assembly of the born, or if these hands or feet that have been so apt to commit iniquity, and so swift to run after vanity shall even be admitted hereafter to carry these *Palm Branches*, and to follow the *Lamb where ever he goeth*, and whether ever these hearts that have been indeed a *Den of thieves, and house of idols*, may yet notwithstanding, be a dwelling for the Holy Ghost: Though these things (we say) and such like may be the subject of many sad debates to some weary souls, yet Faith can bring all these mysteries to light, and looking *within the veil*, can let us see thousands of thousands who were once as ugly as our selves, yet now having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, are admitted to stand before the Throne of God, and serve him day and night.

Now there is that fourthly, which we promised to speak of concerning this grace of Faith from the words, and it is the absolute necessity that is of the exercise of this grace, which is holden forth in the word, *his Commandments*: which doth import three things, 1. That all the Commands that

to obey without this Commandment of Faith, it is  
 as a polluting of our selves, and a plunging of our  
 lives in the ditch till our own cloaths abhor us.  
 That God taketh greater delight in the exercise of  
 the grace of Faith, then in the exercise of any other.  
 And lastly, that as to the many imperfections which  
 we have in our obedience, there is a sweet act of obli-  
 tion past of them all; if we make conscience seriously  
 to obey this command of Faith, which is indeed  
 the sweet compend of the Gospel, all these things do  
 most clearly appear, in that believing here is called  
 the *Commandment*, by way of excellency, as if this  
 were his only Commandment.

But that we may yet a little more particularly  
 set out the absolute necessity of Faith; there are  
 these things that speaketh it forth to the full, 1. That  
 enough rivers of tears should run down our eyes, be-  
 cause we keep not his Law, though we should never  
 lift off our knees from prayer, and should all our  
 life-time speak to God with the tongue of Angels;  
 and though we should constantly obey his Com-  
 mandments; yet without Faith we should never escape  
 that eternal sentence of excommunication from the  
 presence of the Lord; there being no action that doth  
 proceed from us which can please the majesty of the  
 Lord, unlesse it hath its rise from this principle of  
 Faith: as is clear from *Heb. 11. 6. Without Faith it  
 is impossible to please God.* And though we should  
 offer unto him ten thousand rivers of oyl, and thou-  
 sands of rams, and should offer up in a burnt sacrifice  
 all the beasts that are upon the mountains, and the trees  
 that are upon hills, this should be the answer that God  
 should return to us, *Who hath required these things at  
 your hands? I take no pleasure in these solemn sacrifices;*  
 because there is no way of attaining peace with God,  
 but through the exercise of Faith, making use of the

spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ. 1. Let us do our utmost, by all the inventions we can, bring down our body, and let us separate our hearts from all the pleasures of the flesh: yet all our labors shall reign without much contradiction, except we do attain unto this grace of Faith, which is *the victory whereby we must overcome the world*, and the *hand that maketh use of infinite strength for subduing of corruption*, making the Christian sweetly to sing *up that song, Stronger is he that is with us, than that which is the world.*

From all this that we have said, both of the sweetness of Faith, and the necessity thereof, we will propose these few considerations, to two or three sorts of persons. 1. There are some who live in that imaginary delusion of attaining heaven through a Covenant of Works, and do neglect to seek salvation by Faith in the righteousness of Christ. And these who build upon this sandy foundation, I will say but these two words. First, How long shall ye *boast in the fire of very vanity*, do ye ever think to *stand on the capstone*, know ye not that the day is *proclaiming*, when your house shall fall about your ears, your confidence shall be rejected, and your hope *shall vanish as a dream, and flee away as a vision of the night.* Secondly, What a monstrous blindness, and what an unspeakable act of folly must it be, to say, that Christ was crucified in vain, which yet ye do practically assert, when ye go about to purchase a righteousness through the works of the Law.

2. There are some who are secure in their own thoughts concerning their faith: they never questioned the reality of it, they never examined it. O whose faith is as old as yourselves, ye say ye never knew what it was to dispute: and I may say, ye never knew what it was to believe, *Thou profane*

Let me tell thee, a strong faith, and yet strong  
 delusion, must needs be a strong delusion; Thou wilt  
 obey the Lord, thou wilt not pray, thou wilt not  
 believe a threatening in all the Word, thou wilt count  
 Religion madnesse and foolishness, and yet thou  
 wilt perswade thy self, thou Believest in Christ. O  
 how deceived, God is not mocked, and why will ye  
 mock your selves? Shall I tell you that reprobates  
 have a sad Religion, one day they must believe, and  
 pray, and give a testimony to Godliness,  
 alas too late, and little to their advantage. Shall  
 he whom all the Ministers on earth could scarce  
 perswade to believe so much, as a heaven or hell,  
 and a threatening in all the Book of God, at last be  
 forced to believe their own sense, when they shall  
 see the Ancient of Days upon the Throne, and shall  
 hear the cries of so many thousand living witnesses,  
 come out both from heaven and hell, bearing testi-  
 mony to the truth of threatnings and promises, that  
 not one jot of them is fallen to the ground, and he  
 who would never be perswaded to bow a knee to  
 God in earnest all his life, shall he not then pray  
 with the greatest fervency, that hills and mountains might  
 cover him, to cover him from the face of the Lord?  
 And he that would never submit to a Command of  
 God, must he not at last obey that dreadful Com-  
 mand, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting tor-  
 ment, &c.* Yes, he who was the greatest mocker  
 of the world, shall then confess, that they are blest  
 who put their trust in the Lord, as they are excel-  
 lently brought in, though in an Apocryphal Book,  
 2. Esdr. 8. 5. 4. Crying out with great terror, while  
 they behold that unexpected sight of the glorious  
 manifestation of the Godly. O here is the men say they  
 whom we mocked, whose life we accounted mad-  
 ness, and their end dishonourable; Be wise there-

fore in time, and do that willingly, which ye must  
by constraint, and do that with sweetnesse and  
rage, that ye must do at length with losse and sorrow.

Thirdly, There are some who certainly have  
hope of eternal life, but contenteth themselves with  
small measure of assurance, and these I would be  
that ye would be more endeavouring to make  
calling and election sure, and would be endeavour  
to see your names written in the ancient Record  
Heaven: and this we shall presse upon you by  
Arguments, 1. Those strong and subtil, and  
destroying delusions that are amongst many, who  
ceive they do believe (as we were saying) and  
*pure in their own eyes, who yet are not purged from*  
*iniquities.* O! are there not many of us that are  
golden dream, that suppose *we are eating, but what*  
*awake our soul is empty*, whose faith is a metaph  
notion, that hath no foundation, but mans ap  
hension; and this shall never bear us through  
gates of death, nor convey us in into eternity of  
2. May not this presse you to follow after assurance  
that it is the compendious way to sweeten all  
crosses: As is clear from *Hab. 3. 17. 18.* where  
convictions of this made *Habakkuk* to rejoyce in  
*God of his salvation*; *Though the fig tree did not*  
*fruit, and the labour of the olive did fail, and there*  
*no sweetnesse to be found in the wine, and from Habbakuk*  
*34.* where they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods  
*knowing within themselves that they had a*  
*and an enduring substance.* This is indeed that  
which if we cast into the waters of *Marah*, they  
presently become sweet: for it is not below the  
of hope to be much anxious about these things  
meets with here, when he sincerely knoweth  
Commandement shall come forth, *Lift up your*  
*for the day of your eternal redemption draweth nigh*

day when all the rivers of his sorrow shall sweetly  
 run into the ocean of everlasting delights. 3. A  
 Christian that is much in assurance, he is much in  
 communion and fellowship with God, as is clear from  
 Song 1. 13, 14. and Song 2. 3. where, when once  
 cometh to that, to be perswaded that Christ was  
 beloved, then she sat down under his shadow,  
 and his fruit was pleasant unto her taste; for the as-  
 sured Christian doth taste of these crumbs that fall from  
 the higher Table, and no doubt, these that have  
 tasted of that old wine will not straight way desire  
 to renew, because the old is better. And then 4. It  
 is the way to keep you from Apostacy, and making  
 separation from God: Faith is that grace that will  
 make you continue with Christ in all his tentations,  
 as is clear from 2 Pet. 1. 10. where this is set down as  
 the fruit of making our calling and election sure, that  
 if we do these things we shall never fail: Faith makes  
 the Christian to live a dependent life, for would you  
 know the motto of a Christian? It is this, *self-diffi-*  
*dence, and Christ dependence*, as is clear from that word  
 in the Song 8. 5. that while we are walking through  
 the wilderness, *we are leaning upon our well-beloved*.  
 This assurance will help a man to overcome many  
 temptations. There are four sorts of temptations that  
 assault the Christian; there are temptations of de-  
 sires, temptations of love, temptations of hope, and  
 temptations of anxiety, all which a Christian through  
 the noble grace of assurance, may sweetly overcome:  
 that hath once made Christ his own, what can he  
 love but him? As *Psal. 17. 4. One thing have I de-*  
*sired of the Lord: What can he love more then Christ,*  
*what can he love beside Christ, all his love being drowned* (as  
 were) *in that Ocean of his excellencies, and a*  
*perfect complacency found in the enjoyments of him?*  
 as to hope, will not assurance make a Christian  
 cry



cry forth, *Now, Lord, what wilt thou for my hope?*  
 And when the heart is anxious, doth not a  
 finer make a Christian content to bear the indigni-  
 ty of the Lord, and patiently submit unto the cross,  
 since there is a sweet connexion betwixt his Cross  
 and his Crown, *Rom. 8. 35, 36. If he suffer with*  
*him, he shall also reign with him.* And lastly, This  
 is this argument to press you to assurance, that  
 sweeteneth the thoughts of death; it maketh death  
 to a Christian, not the king of terrors, but the king  
 of desires; and it is upon these grounds that assurance  
 maketh death refreshful unto a Christian. 1. That  
 knoweth that it is the funeral of all his miseries,  
 the birth-day of all his blessed and eternal com-  
 ments. 2. That it is the Coronation day of a Chri-  
 stian, and the day when he shall have that Marriage  
 betwixt Christ and him sweetly solemnized: And  
 that when he is to step that last step, he knoweth  
 death will make him change his place, but not  
 company: And O that we could once win unto  
 to seal that conclusion without presumption, *My*  
*Lord is mine, and I am his:* We might without  
 presumption, sing one of the Songs of *Sion*, even when  
 we are in this strange land, and taking Christ in  
 arms, might sweetly cry forth, *Now latest thou*  
*servant departs in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salu-*  
*tion.* Comfort your selves in this, that all your clo-  
 shall once pass away, and that that truth shall  
 come to pass which was confirmed by the oath of  
 Angel, with his hand lifted up towards heaven, *Thy*  
*time shall be no more.* Time shall once sweetly  
 out in eternity, and ye may be looking after new  
 ones, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.  
 O, long to be with him, for Christ longeth to  
 you with him.

## SERMON VI.

John. 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that ye should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

**H**ere are three most precious and cardinal graces, which a Christian ought mainly to pursue: There is that ennobling grace of Faith, that comforting grace of Hope, and that aspiring grace of Love: and since a Christian did take up that heavenly distance that is between those sister graces, he might be provoked to move after them most swiftly, as Charlots of *Amiradab*. And there is this difference between those graces: Faith is a sober and patient grace, Hope is a patient and submissive grace, Love is an ambitious and impatient grace, which cryeth out, *My soul, be silent unto God; and I will cry out, I will wait patiently for the Lord, till the vision shall speak; but Love it cryeth out, How long art thou a coming? and it is waiting to hear the sound of his feet coming over the mountains of separation. That is the Motto of Hope, non deservitur, non infertur, that which is delayed or not given, is not altogether taken away and made void: and that may be the divine emblem of the grace of Love. It is sight infolding desire, and it is desire clothed with sight, waiting upon delay and impediments. There is a second difference between these graces: the grace of Faith, it embraceth the truth of the promise; the grace of Hope, it embraceth the distance of the thing that is promised; but that aspiring grace of Love, embraceth the promise:*

Faith

Faith cryeth out, *Haue he spoken it, He also do it*; Hope cryeth out, *Good is the Word of Lord, be it unto thy servant according to thy promise*; And Love, it cryeth out in a higher manner, *As is the apple tree amongst the trees of the wood, so is my well-beloved amongst the sons*. Thirdly, There is that difference between these graces, Faith it overcometh temptations; Hope overcometh difficulties; but Love stayeth home and divideth the spoil: There is a full correspondence between those graces in the Faith it fighteth and conquereth; and Hope fighteth and conquereth; but Love it doth eat the Trophies of the victory. And, Fourthly, there is this difference, the noble grace of Faith it shall once vanish into fight; That noble grace of Hope, it shall once vanish into possession and enjoyment; But that constant grace of Love shall be the eternal companion of a Christian, it shall walk in with him unto the streets of the *Jerusalem*. And I would ask you that question, when shall it be when Faith shall cede to fight? What a day shall it be when Hope shall yield place to Love, and love and fight shall eternally down and solace themselves in these blessed series, these everlasting consolations of Heaven world without end. And fifthly, there is a difference, lesse will satisfie the grace of Faith, and the grace of Hope, than will satisfie the grace of Love; Faith it will be content with the promise, and hope will be content with the thing that is promised; but that ambitious grace of Love, it will be onely content with the promise, Love glaspereth its armes about that precious noble object Jesus Christ; Love is a suspicious grace, it oftentimes cryeth forth, *They haue taken away my Lord, and I know not where they haue*

So that Faith is oftentimes put to resolve  
of suspensions of love. I can compare these three  
graces to nothing so fitly, as to those three great  
miracles that *David* had. These three graces,  
will break thorow all difficulties, were it a  
Thicket of *Philistines*, that so they may pleasure  
the soul, and may drink of that Well of *Bethlehem*,  
the Well of everlasting consolation that floweth  
forth beneath the Throne of God: Love is like  
a dove, it never findeth rest for the sole of  
its foot, untill once it be within that Ark, that  
openeth of repose *Jesus Christ*.

And fixly, There is this last difference between  
Faith, Faith taketh hold upon the faithfulness of  
*Christ*; Hope taketh hold upon the goodnesse  
of *Christ*; but Love, it taketh hold upon the heart  
of *Christ*. And think ye not it must be a pleasant  
and soul-refreshing exercise, to be continually  
taken up in imbracing him, that is that eternal  
vision of Angels. Must it not be an excellent  
way to be feeding on the finest of the wheat,  
to be satisfied with honey out of the rock. O how  
must be a pleasant place? And if once we  
shall but taste of the first ripe grapes, and a clew  
of wine that groweth in that pleasant land,  
must not we be constrained to bring up a good  
report of it?

Now to come to that which we purpose  
to speak of at this time. The last thing con-  
cerning Faith, that we proposed from the words,  
the object upon which Faith exerciseth it  
self, which is here set down to be the Name of our  
*Jesus Christ*. And that we may speak to this  
clearly, we shall first speak a little to the ne-  
gative, what things are not the fit object of Faith;  
then to the positive, shewing you how this  
Name of God, and of His Son *Christ*, is the fore-  
ground

ground upon which a Christian may pitch Faith: For the first, ye must know that a Christian is not to build his faith upon sense, nor sensible enjoyments: Sense may be an evidence of Faith, but it must not be the foundation of Faith. I know there are some that oftentimes cry, *Except I put my fingers into the print of the nail, and thrust my hand into the hole of his side, I will not believe*; and indeed it is a mystery unto the part of us, to be exercising Faith upon a naked word of promise, abstracted from sense; to believe on an absent Christ, and to believe on an abstracted Christ, are the two great mysteries of Christianity. But that sense is no good foundation for Faith may appear. 1. That Faith which is builded on sense, is a most unconfident, a most fluctuating, and transient Faith. I know sense hath its fits of love, and as it were, hath its fits of Faith: Sometimes sense is sick of love, and sometimes sense is strong in Faith, but ere six hours go about, it may be sick of jealousy, and sick of misbelief: ye will see from *Psalm 30. 6, 7.* sense, that is strong in Faith, it will instantly cry out, *My mountain shall be strong, I will never be moved*; but behold soon it changeth its note, *Thou hidest thy face, and I was troubled*. At one time it will cry forth, *Is like unto him that pardoneth iniquity, and that saith over transgressions*; but ere many hours about, it will sing a song upon another key, cry out, *Why art thou become unto me as a liar, as waters that fail?* 2. That Faith which is builded upon sense, it wanteth the promise of *firmness*, for this is annexed to believing, the promise of *firmness* upon the Word, according to the *Joh 20. 29.* *Blessed are these that have not seen, yet have believed*: nor hath that faith that is builded upon sense such a solide joy waiting on it, as

is built upon the naked word of promise, as may  
 be seen from that word, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *whose faith*  
*waiteth for the thing which is not seen, maketh a*  
*rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of*  
*glory* a joy that doth not attend believing, founded  
 in sense. 3. That faith that is built upon sense, it  
 bringeth not much glory to God; for faith that is built  
 upon sense, it exalteth not the faithfulness of God,  
 it exalteth not the omnipotency of God. I will tell  
 you what is the divinity of sense; let me see, and  
 I will believe; but it knoweth not what it is to  
 be upon trust, and because *the Lord hath spoken*  
*truth*: And in effect, Faith that is built upon  
 sense, is no Faith, even as *Rom. 8. Hope that is seen,*  
*is not hope*; And therefore, when the Lord seeth a  
 Christian making sense an idol, that he will not be-  
 lieve; but when he seeth or feeleth, this doth often pro-  
 voke the Majesty of the Lord to withdraw himself  
 from that Christian, and to deny him the sweet in-  
 heritance of heaven, and these consolations that are  
 his; so that in an instant he hath both his sense and  
 his hope to seek:

A Christian is not to make his graces the object  
 of his Faith, that is, when a Christian doth behold  
 his graces within him, when he doth behold in-  
 crease to prayer encreasing, and mortification war-  
 ring, he is not to build his faith upon them;  
 he is condemned in the Church, in *Lev. 26. 10.*  
*I will be angry with you, and will be cruel unto you,*  
*because ye have said, I will be safe, because we have*  
*peace*; but the use that thou dost make of it,  
*thou shalt put thy trust in thy beauty, and shalt thou*  
*say the harlot*. It is certain, that sense when it  
 is the object of our Faith, it doth provoke God to  
 be angry with us, and to make a Christian  
 to exercise thereof, and to make a Chris-  
 tian to have that complaint, *It is so true, my*  
*faithfulness testifieth to my face*. I will tell  
 you three great mysteries of Christianity, about  
 grace

grace; the first is, to ride marches between these, not to deny what they have, and yet to be deny what they have; many times, there is grace-denied and not self-denying, but this is that we would upon you to be denied to grace, according to which is recorded of *Moses*, *his face did shine* *when it was*, he did make it (as it were) and not at all be puffed up with it, for so the word conceive may run. Secondly, it is a great difficulty for a Christian to be denied to his self-denial, humble in his being humble: for if pride can no other foundation, it will build it self upon itself; and a Christian will grow proud in this, he is growing humble. Thirdly, it is a difficulty for a Christian to examine his growing in grace, not be puffed up; It is certain a Christian does examine his growth in grace humbly, according to that, *Psal. 63. 8. My soul followeth hard after thy right hand upholdeth me*: He doth not only notice of this, that his soul did follow after God, of the measure of that pursuit, my soul followeth after thee, and yet sweetly acknowledgeth, not his own feet which carried him, nor his hand that kept him from falling.

3. Ye are not to build your Faith upon works, and upon the righteousness of the Law, need not stand long to refute that practical error that is amongst us, that thinketh we can go to heaven through a Covenant of Works. I told you long since, what your going to heaven through a Covenant of Works speaketh, even this horrid blasphemy, That it was an act of monstrous folly, for Christ to die for sinners; for, if you can go to heaven without him, was not Christ then crucified in vain. And I would tell you now, that this is your damnable ignorance of the weakness and deciduousness of your own merits. O ye



great defenders of Salvation by the Covenant of Grace, I beseech you, What is the reason that ye are the Covenant of Works oftner then any; for there is none that thinketh they will go to heaven by works, but these that are the greatest breakers of the Covenant of Works. And is not that inconsistent, most contradictory divinity, your faith contradicting your practice, and your practice telling you that your faith is a lie.

Thirdly, We must not mix our own righteousness with Christ, as the object of our believing: this indeed an evil that often lodgeth in the bosom of the most refined hypocrite, when Satan can prevail to exclude Christ altogether, then he is at work with that whorish woman, to divide the child, so that the object of our faith be half Christ, and half self. And the truth is, many of these poor unwife people, who stay long in the place of the breaking forth children, do willingly hearken to this overture, that it be presumption for such poor wretches to mix too boldly with the righteousness of Christ; were good such weak ones would consider that *Rom. 10. 3.* where the Holy Ghost calleth the carnal use of His righteousness, an act of submissiveness. *They have not submitted (saith he) unto the righteousness of Christ.* O will ye not lay this to heart, that our Lord will take your believing, or your resting on his righteousness for an act of your humility, and will take your misbelief as a malicious and the highest pride and presumption.

Fourthly, We are not to make providences the object of our faith. I know there are some, that ask, the Lord of their right to heaven, they will tell us, that he hath been kind to them all their dayes. I would they could say as much, *He may be feeding you now the day of wrath, and no man knoweth how or how long he will stay.*

thing that is before him. This much of the object of Faith negatively.

And now to speak to it positively, we see the holdeth out Christ himself as that excellent and pleast object of Faith, *This is his Commandment, we believe on the Name of his Son*; and thus closeth with Christ in a fourfold consideration. It closeth with God in Christ, not with God immediately and nakedly; for, he dwelleth in light inaccessible, that no man can approach unto: He is then the heaven, what can we do? and deeper than what can we know? Job 11. Therefore we must approach unto Him through a vail, even the vail of Christ His flesh, Heb. 10. God is a consuming fire, and of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity; therefore we must first cast our eye upon that blessed Day-man, that laid his hand upon us both; and upon God as in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and to draw near unto him through a Mediator, is the first and the last, and he that liveth and dead, and is alive for evermore, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing he liveth for ever to make intercession for them. Secondly, Faith closeth with Christ, as rendered freely by the Covenant of promise. We could have had nothing to do with Christ, if he had not been given us by the Father, and offered himself in a free Covenant of promise; but he being thus holden forth upon terms of free love (which doth utterly abominat hyre) is to noble a proclamation issued forth under the seal of Heaven, *That whosoever will, may come and drink of the water of life freely*; Upon this the creature draweth near by verue of a right, and bringing out the armes of most enlarged affection, runn upon him with that joyful shout, *My Lord my God*; and then maketh an absolute resignation of himself unto him; which is holden out in the

by that sweet expression of *kissing of the Son*.  
 these are three parts of Christs blessed Body  
 the Christian must endeavour to kiss and im-  
 the mouth of Christ, the hand of Christ, and  
 of Christ the kissing of his feet importing the  
 of love, the kissing of his hands the exercise  
 of communion and fellowship with him. Third-  
 with Christ as the purchaser and me-  
 cause of all the good we receive: He is the  
 that hath purchased all these things unto us,  
 there is not on blink of love, there is not the  
 enjoyment that a Christian meeteth with,  
 is the price of the blood of Christ; Christs pre-  
 cious blood was laid down for it. Fourthly, Faith  
 with Christ as the efficient and worker of all  
 mercies, all our enjoyments they are far from  
 the efficient cause; that is, He is the worker  
 of these things in us, it is his precious fingers that  
 accomplish that blessed work of grace, and they  
 from Christ as the dispenser of these things;  
 He is the great Steward of Heaven, that doth com-  
 mune unto Believers all the Treasures of the high-  
 Heavens; *For Him hath God the Father sealed*. O that  
 word that Christ once spake, is much verified by  
 himself, *It is more blessed to give, then to receive*.  
 He is that fountain and treasure in whom all our  
 mercies and graces are treasured up; for, before the ble-  
 ssings come to Believers, they come to Christ at the  
 Father, according to that word, *1 Tim. 1. 4. Which*  
*was given to us in Him, before the foundations of*  
*the world were laid*: It was given to Christ before  
 the world was made, and for that end, that he might  
 communicate unto all his Members, and for that  
 purpose we all receive, and grace for grace.

Secondly, The Text holdeth forth more parti-  
 cularly this excellent object of Faith, to be the

Name of his Son, That ye believe in the Name of his Son.  
 And here indeed we may be at a stand. It is  
 since *Agur* did thus *plus* all the world with that  
*Agur*, *What is his Name?* and *what is his Son's Name?*  
*if thou canst tell?* O how little a thing can be known  
 of Him! And O how brutish is this generation that  
 know so much lesse then might be known of Him  
 such a day of the Gospel. But that we may speake  
 little, according to our weak measure of Faith, in  
 sing with the Name of Christ. His Name is  
 glorious Attributes, by which he revealeth  
 of Himself in the Scriptures, as poor mortals  
 take up. We did shew you before, that there  
 three of these that were the main pillars of justifi-  
 Faith, Faithfulness, Omnipotence, and His  
 Love, and Mercy; And how from these may be  
 answered all the objections of sense, of carnal  
 and of misbelief, arising from convictions of  
 thinesse. And certain it is, that Faith in all  
 slicts, maketh much use of the Names of Christ.  
 there is not an objection that a poor tempted soul  
 make, but Faith can frame an answer to it, out of  
 of these excellent Names of God, or of his Son.  
 It won't be a more longsome work then I intend  
 let you see this in all; But I shall onely instance  
 that Our glorious Name of God, by which he pro-  
 ceed his glory, *Exod. 34. The Lord, the Lord*  
*merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant*  
*goodnesse and truth: Keeping mercy for thousands,*  
*giving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that*  
*no means clear the guilty, &c.* I think there are  
 ordinary objections which may be answered from  
 place. First, It is an ordinary objection which  
 believers do make, that they are under the stress  
 their corruption, that they are black as the  
*Kedar*, and not beautifull as the *Curtains of*  
 and doth not the first letter of that Name

that he is a *mercifull Lord*? The one importing  
 mercy to save, and to bring down every high imagi-  
 nation: the other importing, his infinite delight  
 in those who have no strength, and are under the  
 power of their adversaries, the power of God being  
 larger extent then his love. There is that second  
 ground of misbelief, that we have nothing to com-  
 mend us to Christ: But all that we have to boast of,  
 our mercies and imperfections: And this is abun-  
 dantly answered from that second letter of his Name,  
 that he is *Gracious*: which importeth the freedom of  
 dispensations of his love, that he walketh not with  
 according to that rule of merit, but according to  
 golden and excellent rule of *Love*. It is a great  
 wonder whether Mercy or Grace be the greatest won-  
 der, whether the love of Christ, or the freedom of  
 the greatest mystery: Sure both these put together  
 make up a matchlesse wonder? Thirdly, Mis-  
 belief will object, that we have forsaken him days  
 without number, and that we cannot trace back our  
 way unto the first day of its rise: And is not that  
 abundantly answered from that letter of his Name,  
 that he is long-suffering? This being that *Glorious*  
 name in God, the glory of which he desireth to mag-  
 nify, and have all his Name. Fourthly, Misbelief doth  
 usually propose this objection, that we have multi-  
 plied our transgressions, and have committed whorsom-  
 ness under every green tree, and have given gifts to our  
 idols, even hyring our idols: So that we may take  
 lamentation, is not our sin great and our trans-  
 gression infinite: And is not that also answered from  
 that letter of his Name, that he is *abundant in good*.  
 That though sin abound in us, yet grace doth  
 more superabound in him. We confesse  
 that there are some that may walk un-  
 der that condition, that if they had no other ex-  
 pectation throughout eternity, but to make themselves

they might confesse and never make any needfull  
 petition: And truly, in some respect, it is a manner  
 we are mysteries unto our self: for, if we did  
 completely the *seven* abominations of our heart  
 and those mysterious actings of the body of  
 we would be in hazard to *chasse strauking and*  
*saue his life*: Yet may not one glimpse of  
*abundant goodnesse* satisfie us, and calm the  
 Fifthly, Saith misbelief, we know that we  
 broken our Vowes and Covenants with God,  
 that all these things that we have taken on, have  
 but as flux before the fire of temptation; so that we  
 no hope that he will haue mercy upon these that  
 broken wedlock, and have not been stedfast  
 Covenants. But is not that abundantly answered  
 from that letter of His Name, *That he is able*  
*to trust*: which speaketh, That though we deny  
 selves, yet he abideth faithfull, and doth not  
 the word that hath gone out of his mouth. It is  
 infinite blessedness of man, that though he be  
 vile, yet they haue to do with one that is an  
 able being. Sixthly, There is that objection  
 That notwithstanding all these things are matters  
 encouragement to some, yet they know not what  
 or not the lot of everlasting love have fallen  
 them, and whether their names be in the  
 records of Heaven. But this is answered from  
 letter of His Name, *he keepeth mercy for thousand*  
 which sheweth us that great number of those  
 whom the lot of everlasting love shall fall: And  
 there were no other sentence in all the Scriptures  
 this might be a sufficient matter of a Song,  
 might make us cry out, *Who is like unto him*,  
*compassions have no end*, and who desires to  
*his mercy above all his works*? And lastly, Misbelief  
 maketh this objection, They have sinned  
 against light, not only against vowes, nor

much enjoyment of God, but even after the  
 of threarnings: So that they conceive,  
*their Maker will not have mercy upon such.* Yet  
 is fully answered likewise from that letter of His  
 He *forgiveth iniquity, transgression and sin*:  
 three words doth abundantly speak forth,  
 there is no transgression which he will not  
 on, there being but one particular amongst all  
 innumerable number of sins which lodgeth in  
 heart of fallen man, that he declared unpardon-  
 And there is none of our diseases that is above  
 infinit act of love; and concerning which we can  
 up that complaint, *There is no balm in Gilead,*  
*there is no Physician there.* And though providence  
 matter up many impossibilities, yet let Faith take  
 promise in the one hand, and impossibilities in  
 other, and desire God to reconcile them; that if  
 can not see any connexion between Providence  
 the Word; yet may we reflect upon the omni-  
 cy of God, that can make things that are seem-  
 contrary sweetly to agree together; the Con-  
 may will never destroy the Text, nor Providence  
 never destroy the faithfulness of God: And  
 give you this advice, that those objections of  
 belief which you cannot answer, and, in a man-  
 uttereth you to a *non plus*, and when ye have look-  
 over all the *Names of God*, ye cannot find an  
 to them, sleight them and cover them, as we  
 often told you was the practice of believing  
 Rom. 4. 19. where that strong objection  
 unbelief appearing before his eyes, the *deadnesse*  
*of his body*, and the *barrennesse of Sarahs womb*: It is  
 of him, *he considered not these things*: as if  
 he had a divine transiion from the objections  
 belief to the acting of Faith: and this is clear  
 Math. 15. 25, 26. Where that strong objection  
 belief being proposed against that woman, that



she was not within the compass of Christ's mission, she hath a noble way of answering this, *Lord have mercy upon me*. And (if so we speak) Faith hath a kind of divine impertinence, answering the objections of misbelief; or rather holy sleighting of them that gaineth the victory, exvilling with temptations will not do it.

The like also may be instanced in His Name: O how glorious titles are given to that *Prince of the Kings of the earth*, and to that *Plant of renown* on which the weakest faith may cast anchor, and out the greatest storm. I shall not detain you long this subject, but this we would have you know, there is no strait nor difficulty that a Christian be exposed unto, but there is some name or attribute of Christ that may sweetly answer that difficulty, make up that disadvantage. Is a Christian exposed unto afflictions and troubles in a present world? Let him comfort him self in this, that Christ is the *stone of a great rock in a wearied land*; Is a Christian under inward anxiety and vexation of mind? Let him comfort himself in this, that Christ is the *God of peace and of all consolation*; Is a Christian under darkness and confusion of spirit? Let him comfort himself in this, That Christ is the *Father of lights*, and the *eternal wisdom of God*; Is a Christian under the dominions of his lusts? Let him comfort himself in this, that Christ is *Redemption*; yea (that I say no longer) if it were possible that a Christian should have a necessity that he could not find a name of Christ to answer it, he may lawfully frame a name of Christ out of any promise in all the Book of Genesis, and he should find it forthcoming for the relief and making up of that necessity, God would not disappoint his expectation.

There is yet one thing further, in reference

of Faith, which we shall desire you to take  
of; and it is the way of Faiths closing with its  
object, and its resting on him: and this we  
may be excellently taken up, by our consid-  
eration of the many several names that Faith getteth in  
Scripture, beyond any other of the graces of the Spi-  
rit. It is called looking, *Isa. 45. 22. Look unto me:*  
It is called abiding in Christ, *Job. 14. 4. Abide in me:*  
It is called a keeping silence unto God, *Psal. 37. 2.*  
It is called a trusting in God: Or as the word is in the Origin-  
al, *My soul be silent unto God;* and that in *Psal. 62.*  
*My soul waiteth:* Or as the word is, *Trust my soul*  
*unto God.* Likewise Faith is called a leaning,  
*Job. 7. 25. I have leaned upon thee from my youth:*  
Faith is called an eating of Christ's flesh, *John*  
*6. 51. Faith is called a casting of our burden upon God,*  
*Psalm 55. 22. Cast your burden upon God:* and Faith is  
called a coming unto God, *Matth. 23. 38. And re-  
sponding to these different names there are three sever-  
al properties & markeable differences of this grace  
of Faith. The first is, That this is, this grace by  
which a Christian doth enjoy much communion with  
God. Hence it is called a looking, which importeth  
that faith is a continual contemplation of the unmove-  
able upon that precious and excellent object, Jesus  
Christ. There is that second property of faith, That it  
is that grace by which a communion with God is  
maintained: Hence it is called an abiding in God.  
That grace which maketh Christ and the believer  
well together. The third property of Faith is,  
That it is a most submissive grace: Hence it is called  
a keeping silence unto God: Faith as it were, know-  
ing not what it is to repine. It is the noble excellency  
of Faith, it never knew what it was to misbehave  
towards Christ. It is the noble excellency of Faith, it  
never knew what it was to passe an evil report upon  
God. Faith it will promise good things in a Chris-  
tian*

Rise in the darkest night; for, when Love rises  
 Faith that question, Isa. 21. 11, 12. *Watchman, what  
 of the night? Watchman, what of the night?* O  
 when shall the morning break? Faith answereth  
 with the words that follow. (onely a little inverted  
 the order) *The night cometh, and also the morning*  
*the morning is approaching, that admitteth of no fol-*  
*lowing night.* There is that fourth property of Faith.  
 It is the grace which keepeth a Christian in per-  
 severance, by its building upon the rock. Hence it  
 is called a *leaning upon God*; for a Christian by Fa-  
 ith perpetually joyn himself to Christ, so that wh-  
 ever trouble he be cast into, by Faith he cometh  
 out of that *wildernesse, leaning upon his beloved*,  
 by Faith he is led up to the *Rock that is higher then*  
*where he may sit in safety*, and even laugh at de-  
 struction when assailing him. There is a  
 fifth property of Faith, That it is the grace  
 that bringeth satisfaction unto the spirituall senses of  
 a Christian, by a close and particular application  
 of Christ as the nourishment of the soul. Hence it is  
 called an *eating of the flesh of Christ*. These are the  
 senses that Faith satisfieth, Faith satisfieth the  
 sense of sight, it satisfieth the sense of taste, and it  
 satisfieth the sense of touch; Faith will make a Christian  
 handle that eternall word of life: Faith will make  
 a Christian see that noble plant of renown; And Faith  
 will make a Christian taste and see how gracious  
 the Lord is. And no doubt, these that have once satisfied  
 their sight, they will be longing to satisfy their  
 taste. There is that sixth property of Faith, It is that  
 grace which giveth rest unto a Christian: Hence it is  
 called a *casting of our burden upon him*: It is, as it were,  
 the soul giving unto Christ that unsupportable  
 burden of our iniquities, and taking from Christ that  
 heavy and yoke of his Commandments. And  
 finally, There is that last property of Faith,

the grace by which Sanctification is promoted, is called a *coming to Christ*: It is the soul in a *new motion and travelling* from the land of *Egypt* into the land of *Canaan*. Faith, it is the soul in a *pleasant motion* from the land of the North, the land of *captivity*, unto that land of perfect liberty, *along going out by the footsteps of the flock, and walking in that new and living way, even in Him who is the perfect Truth and the Life.*

And now for a more full application of this, we shall speak but to two things further. 1. We would have it considered, that there are some that come into the Covenant of Promise with less difficulty, and after a more divine and evangelick way; and there are some that close with Christ, in a more difficult and legall way; there are some that before they come to mount Sion, they must dwell fourty dayes at mount Sinai. There are some, before the streets of heaven shall be given to them, they must tread as an ox, and must cover themselves with sackcloth, having ashes upon their heads; we must be a *mourner* before we be *Benjamin*, that is, we must be a *son of sorrow*, before we can be a *son of consolation*. And this is certain, that Christ leadeth sometimes his people to himself through a valley of roses: And I would only have you taking notice of these two. First, though we conceive they be not infallible in the rule, yet oftentimes experience maketh them to be truth. 1. That there are three sorts of persons who are most ordinarily brought under great labour, ere they close with Christ. First, These are who have committed some grosse and shewable sin which is most contradicting unto the light of nature. Secondly, That person that sinneth much against the light, before conversion: Hence it is observed in all the Books of the Gospel, and in the book of the Acts, that there was a more Gospel and love way of converting

the Gentiles, then was of converting the Jews, *Mat. 23. 35.* there is a sharp Law exercise among them who had crucified the Lord of Life and *Act. 7. 58.* Paul that had been a grievous persecutor, in his conversion, he is first stricken dead to the ground before he be made a captive of the love of Christ, and strained to cry out, *What wilt thou have me to do?* look to *Act. 8.* and chap. 29. and there ye will find more fair and smooth way of begetting sons to Christ. And, thirdly, that person that is much in opposition his own righteousness, he useth to be brought to Christ through much sorrow and exercise of the Law, that is clear in Paul, his condition also, *Phil. 3.* and *Act. 9.* compared; and certainly, who is thicksk to come that length in self abatement, will count as the Apostle doth in that Chapter, we dwell many days at mount Sinai, and learn Arithmeticke there. 3. We would have you take notice of this, that though the person that is brought in to Christ in a more smooth and evangelick way may have the prebeminency of the person that is brought to Christ after a more legal and terrible in some things. Yet we conceive, that a Christ that is brought to Christ through much of the exercise of the Law, and through many of the thunderings of mount Sinai, after he hath won to see his right Christ, he is more constant in the exercise of Faith, and the reason of it is, because that an ordinary ground of misbelief is our not distinguishing either of the time of our conversion, which is oftentimes from these persons that are converted in a more evangelick way, as likewise this, that those persons are brought to Christ in a more Gospel manner, sometimes put to debate, whether ever they were under the exercise of the Law, and his master hath often (as it were) to take the foundation under their feet, *My hope, and my strength is nailed upon*

And now to shut up our discourse, we shall use this one word of exhortation; that ye would carefully lay hold upon that noble object, and anchor your faith upon him; and I shall say but this, that all these that have this noble grace of Faith, and are heirs of that everlasting inheritance; There is a fourfold Crown prepared for you; There is a Crown of life that is prepared for him that shall fight the good fight of Faith; but what may you say for a Crown of Life, except we have joy waiting upon the life? for what is life without joy, but a bitter-sweet, and a burthen to it self? Therefore ye shall have a crown of joy; but what were a crown of Life, and a crown of joy, except we had the grace of Holiness, and were compleat in that? Therefore, ye shall have also a crown of righteousness: But, what were Life, Joy and Righteousness, without Glory? Therefore ye shall have likewise a crown of Glory. But of all these, if that Crown should once fall from your head, and we should be deprived of our Kingdom: Therefore, take this to make up all the rest, an eternal crown of Glory. That word in *Psa. 132*. The crown, finish Solomon, doth we wear for ever: But this precious Crown that the Father of Christ shall fix upon the head of an overcoming Christian, this is the motto that is engraven upon it, *Unchangeable and Eternal, Eternal and Unchangeable*. And O what a day suppose ye shall that be, when this precious Crown shall be put upon our heads? Do you think you will be the difference betwixt Christ and the Believers in heaven? They shall have these crowns which are indeed one; but Christ shall wear upon his head many Crowns, according to *Rev. 19. 12*. But let me say one word also to those who are strangers from God, and are destitute of the grace of Christ, and will not by faith close upon this excellent Object, There is a fourfold crown

crown that once shall be put upon your heads; but  
 not misinterpret the vision: There is a difference  
 between the *Butler* and the *Baker*; ye may prosper  
 good things to your self, but there is a crown of death  
 which ye shall once have put upon your heads; ye shall  
 be alwayes dying, & never able to die: there is a crown  
 of sorrow that ye shall have put upon your head, when  
 ye shall eternally sigh forth that lamentation, *O woe  
 woe, and reduced unto nothing*, when the reduction  
 of you into nothing would be a heaven, when ye shall  
 be tormented in those everlasting flames. And I would  
 say this by the way, ye will be all miserable, comfort  
 is one to another, there will be no ground of consolation  
 that ye shall reap, for the community of your  
 sorrow shall increase the degrees of that sorrow. And there  
 is another crown also that ye shall put on, and that  
 is a crown of sin, instead of that crown of righteousness.  
 Would you know your exercise, O ye that are predestinated  
 unto these everlasting pains? Would ye know your  
 exercise? It is this, ye shall eternally blaspheme and curse  
 the God that made you. I am perswaded of this, that the  
 torments of hell will afflict you more, and doeth, than  
 that of the sinning perpetually in hell. Ye would think  
 nothing many of you to be in hell, if there were  
 pain there; for the exercise of sin it will be your death  
 and life, but be perswaded of it, that when your conscience  
 is awakened, the exercise of sinning shall exceedingly  
 aggravate your pain. And there is this crowning  
 lastly, that ye shall put on, and that is the crown of  
 shame. The Prophet *Isaiab* maketh mention of a crown  
 of pride, but ye that have put on that crown of pride  
 shall once put on that crown of everlasting confusion  
 and shame, when ye shall not be able to lift up your  
 head to him whom ye have pierced: I would fain desire ye  
 know, what will be your exercise at these three crowns.  
 What will be your exercise when death shall be  
 murthering you to remove, and ye shall first be



unto these everlasting pains; I am perswaded ye  
 will reflect much. Will ye not reflect upon many Ser-  
 mons that ye have heard, wherein ye have been in-  
 vited to partake of the sweet offers of Salvation? I  
 remember of one, that upon his death bed cryed  
 out, *A world for time, a world for one inch of time,*  
 that perhaps did hold his head high, and no doubt  
 a greater than the greatest here; his Crown could  
 purchase on inch of time, but dying with this,  
*Time again, call time again;* that petition was  
 cryed, and so it shall be, I fear, to the most part  
 that are here. I think it was a pretty Hieroglyphick  
 that the Egyptians, they painted Time with three heads;  
 the first head that painted out time that was past,  
 like a greedy Wolfe gaping, which importeth this,  
 that our time past was mispent, and there was no-  
 thing left, but like a Wolfe to gape for it again: And  
 the second head of a roaring Lyon, round  
 which import the time present, and for this end was  
 painted, that people might lay hold upon their pre-  
 sent opportunities; otherwise, it would be the mark  
 of their ruine, and of their eternal condoling. And  
 the third was that last head, which was of a decrepit  
 old man, fawning; which signified, that people they de-  
 ceive themselves with the time to come, thinking  
 they will be religious at their death; and that  
 they will overcome at their death, but this is flatter-  
 ing, no better then the fawning of a mad Dog. I  
 think we may learn much of this, even to be provoked  
 to lay hold upon our golden opportunities; that  
 we sell not our time, but that we buy it. There are  
 three things that a Christian must not sell, that is,  
 not the truth but buy it, and sell not your time but  
 buy it. I am perswaded of this, that one moment of  
 time is worth ten thousand words, if improved;  
 and I would ask you, what advantage shall ye have  
 of all things that ye have to meddle you  
 about.

about, when time shall be no more? I suppose  
 dead, this is an ordinary evil amongst the people  
 this age, of which we have our own share and por-  
 tion. There are many that envy Godliness, and  
 the Godly, *The excellent ones that are in the land*  
 that think it a pleasure to vent their malice against  
 such: I know that ordinary practice it is older  
 thousand years then themselves, that they per-  
 Godliness under the name of hypocrisie: They  
 Godliness hypocrisie, and upon that account they  
 gin and speak maliciously against it: onely I would  
 ask you this question, What will ye say in that  
 when Christ will ask that question at you, that  
 asked at Zech and Zalmunra, who are these  
 ye filled with your tongue: Must it not be answered  
 Every one, *did resemble the person of a King?* O  
 ye not believe! will ye not close with Christ?  
 know it is ordinary that we run upon these two  
 means, sometimes we do not believe the threatenings  
 of the Law, and sometimes we will not believe  
 promises of the Gospel. But I would only desire  
 know, what if it had been so ordered in the in-  
 willows of God, that all the letters of this Bo-  
 should have been threatenings? What should  
 been our lot, if all the promises should have been  
 scraped out of it. But certainly this must be  
 lot, all the promises of the Book of this Covenant  
 shall be taken from you, and all the curses thereof  
 be a flying roll that shall enter within your house  
 and shall there eternally remain. Know this, O  
 that are enemies to Christ, know it and think  
 it, *Every battel of the warriners is with confused  
 and with garments rolled in blood:* But that war  
 Christ shall have against the hypocrites in Zion,  
 those that are ignorant of him, and will not close  
 him, it shall be *with smell of fire and eternal indig-*  
 tion. O what will be your thoughts suppose you

shall come with that two-edged sword of the  
 Lord, to smite to fight with you: Is an  
 exercise. Oh that ye were not asleep, but  
 be persuaded to be Christians, and that each  
 might conquer you with that two-edged sword  
 proceedeth out of his mouth, that so ye might subje-  
 ct yourselves to him, and make him the object of your  
 love. Now to him that hath engraven upon his  
 arm, and on his thigh, that He is King of kings, and  
 Lord of lords, we desire to give praise.



# A S E R M O N

Concerning the  
 Great Salvation.

1.3.3. How shall we escape if we neglect  
 the great Salvation, which at the first be-  
 gan to be spoken by the Lord, and was con-  
 firmed unto us by them that heard him.

**T**His everlasting Gospel, which he preached  
 unto you, is that glorious Sun, which shall  
 lead us to the place where blessed  
 doth ly. This Gospel and glads tidings  
 of the Great Salvation is come near unto you: And  
 he is standing at the everlasting doors of your  
 hearts, desiring that ye would open unto him. There

is that one great request which heaven, this high, so present unto you, and it is, That you would at last embrace this Great Salvation so offered by him. Is in the thing for which ye are called to mourn this day, that since the day of your fathers, and since the beginning of your eyes, ye have stopped your ears from that sweet and charming voice of this blessed Charter. *I would never dance to Christ when he piped, neither would ye weep to him when he lamented.*

But to come to the words which we have read unto you: The Apostle in the former Chapter hath been discoursing most divinely, of the most perfect and incomparable excellencies which are in our blessed Lord Jesus; And in the first verse of this second Chapter, he draweth forth an exhortation from his former Doctrine, which is this, That they would take heed to the blessed Doctrine of the Gospel: *And not at any time to be lost out of our minds*; and that they would value this Gospel as a Jewel of great price, and would not sell it, but that they would be induced to retain it. And this exhortation he presseth by two arguments.

The first Argument is in the second verse, where he saith, *If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompence of reward, &c.* That is, If the transgression of the Law, which was delivered by the Ministry of Angels, and every disobedience to it was so severely punished; Let that prove unto you to take heed, that ye transgress not the precious Gospel, which was spoken by the Son of God himself.

The second Argument is in the words which we have read unto you, and it is taken from the just and infallible streak of the Justice of God, which shall come upon those who slight this

## *the Great Salvation.*

[10]

tion: it is impossible (saith he) that there be a city of refuge for these who slight this Great Salvation.

Now in the words which we have read, there are these six things to be considered.

First, That it is an evil incident to the hearing of this precious Gospel and Great Salvation, to slight and undervalue it; This is clearly proposed in the words, otherwise there had been ground or access for the Apostle to threaten terrible things against the slights of it.

2. The second thing to be considered in the words, is, That the stroke and ruine of those who slight this Great Salvation, is certain, and inevitable; it will surely come upon them. This is seen from these words, *How shall we escape?* As if he had said; there is no imaginable way for us to escape, if we neglect (this) *Great Salvation*; we may have a city of refuge when we are pursued by the Law; or, when we are persecuted by men, and we may escape when we are persecuted by the Justice of God; but if we slight this Great Salvation, there remains no city of refuge (no door of escape is open) for us, for where will the person flee that slighteth this Great Salvation?

3. There is this third thing wherof we shall have notice from the words, That the stroke of the Justice of God cometh justly upon them who slight this Great Salvation; and truly it is a most just and reasonable stroke, which is intimated in the words, *How shall we escape?* if we slight this Great Salvation? where he puts it before our eyes, as if he had said, think ye not that it is just and righteous that (if ye slight this Great Salvation) there should not be a door of escape for you? He putteth the question first, as if he would have us answer, yea or no.

IV. The

IV. The fourth thing to be considered in words, is this, That the slighting this Great Salvation is a sin that hath many aggravations warranting and waiting upon it. And it hath two great aggravations from the words which I have read; first great aggravation in that word of the Text *Great Salvation*, as if he had said, if it were *Great Salvation*, ye might have some cloak or excuse for your slighting of it: but seeing it is such *Great and eternal Salvation*, there is now no cloak left for your sin. The second aggravation is in the certainty of this Salvation: in these words *Which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and confirmed unto us by those that heard him, viz. Apostles*, whereby he telleth them, this Great Salvation is no notion nor fancy; but a most certain, and real Salvation, which yet they slight.

V. The fifth thing whereof we shall take notice from the words, is this, That there are no persons (be who they will, Minister or people) who may slight this Great Salvation, that shall have a door of escape. Hence it is, that the Apostle put himself among the rest, saying, *How shall I escape, if we neglect so Great Salvation; Thou How shall I Paul, escape, if I neglect so great Salvation; and so frustrate the grace of God?*

VI. Sixthly, we would take notice of this in the words, That not only heart despising of this Great Salvation, but even also the very neglect of it, hath a certain, infallible and unspicable punishment attending upon it.

Now, before we begin to speak to any of these six things (which we have observed from the words) There are these two things whereof we shall speak a little, for clearing of the words. First, what is meant here by *Great Salvation*. Secondly, how it is said, that Christ was the *preacher of it*.

we conceive, that by the Great Salvation, is understood the Gospel, as is clear, *Eph. 1. 13.* where it is called, *the Gospel of our salvation*, and *13. 26.* it is called *the word of this salvation*, that by the word of this Salvation, is understood the Gospel, and these precious offers which are designed in it. And we conceive, it may be called a Great Salvation in these eight respects.

First, it is called the Great Salvation, in relation of the price that was laid down for it. There being no less price laid down to purchase this Great Salvation, then the *blood of the Son of God*, whence then doth Salvation flow unto you? comes running to you in a stream of the blood of the Son of God, This is clear, *Heb. 9. 12.* *where by the blood of Goats and Calves; but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, obtaining eternal redemption for us.*

Secondly, it is called a Great Salvation, in respect of the many difficulties and oppositions which lay in the way of bringing it about. What impediments (suppose ye) lay to Christ before he could accomplish and bring about this Great Salvation? Was not the justice of God to be satisfied? Was he not to die, and be made unto one of us? Was he not to lie in the tomb? And was he not to bear the torments of hell, before this Great Salvation could be accomplished and brought to passe? There were such impediments in the way of bringing about this Great Salvation, that if all the Angels in Heaven were set to the work, they had been all consumed under it, had it been but that one great impediment, to satisfy the Justice, and pacify the wrath of God, even that was a passe through which he could go, but the eternal Son of God, who was so guarded that none durst adventure to touch him, how could any win through to save? He was as mighty to save.

III. Thirdly,



III. Thirdly, it is called a Great Salvation, respect of that high estimation which the Saints of this Gospel Salvation! There is no mercy which they think comparable to this, all mercies are but little *Zoars* in comparison of Great Mercy, and Gospel Salvation.

IV. Fourthly, it is called a great Salvation, respect of these noble effects which this Salvation bringeth about, and produceth. Some of the great effects of the Gospel, *David* hath cleared *Psal.* 19. 7, 8, 9, 10. Is not this a great effect of this Gospel Salvation, to bring us out of darkness into an estate of grace? And that is an effect of this Great Salvation. Is not this a great effect of this Great Salvation, to make us who were enemies become friends? And that is an effect of this Great Salvation. Is not this a great effect, to make us who were moving in the way to hell, move in the way to heaven? And that is an effect of this great Salvation. Is not this a great effect, to make us who were far off, be now made near? and yet that is an effect of this Great Salvation. And is not this a great effect, to make us who were darkness, become light? And that is the great effect of this Great Salvation. Yes, I may say, none would fail to tell of all the great effects of this Great Salvation. But O, will ye come and see, and that will resolve the question unto you, what the effects of this Great Salvation are.

V. Fifthly, it is called a Great Salvation, respect of the great advantages which do attend upon the person who imbraceth it. First, not Heaven's noble advantage? and that is a gain, which attendeth the imbracers of this Salvation. Secondly, Is not Jesus Christ an advantage? And yet he is the advantage which attendeth the imbracers of this Great Salvation.

Fourthly, Is not eternal communion with God a most  
 advantage? And that advantage attendeth the  
 access of this Great Salvation. Fourthly, Is not  
 liberation from the body of death, a great ad-  
 vantage? and that attendeth the imbracers of this  
 Salvation. Fifthly, Is not eternal singing in  
 enjoyment of God a great advantage? and that  
 attendeth the imbracers of this Salvation. Sixthly,  
 Is not eternal seeing of God as he is, a great and  
 advantage? And yet this (as all the former)  
 attendeth the imbracers of this Great Salvation. Yea,  
 would ye be rich? O then imbrace this Great Salva-  
 tion. Would ye be honourable? Come and im-  
 brace this Great Salvation. Would ye be eternally  
 happy? O then come and partake of this Great Sal-

Secondly, Sixthly, It is called a Great Salvation, In re-  
 spect of all other Salvations that ever were accomplish-  
 ed. There was never a salvation, or victory obtained  
 by General or Captain (unto a Land or people)  
 which could have the name of Great Salvation in com-  
 parison of this.

Thirdly, Seventhly, It is called a Great Salvation,  
 In respect of the authority of it. We have spoken of  
 the greatness (as to the meritorious cause) of it,  
 how great things it doth effectuate; and also in  
 respect of the authority of it, it is a Great Salvation,  
 because ye know who is the Author of this Great Sal-  
 vation? It is Christ, Heb. 5. 9. *He became the Au-  
 thor of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him.* And  
 shall not this Salvation be suitable to him who is the  
 Author of it. This is one of the most noble and im-  
 mense beams of the Majesty of the Son of God that  
 declare that he is the Author of this Great Salvation.

Fourthly, Eighthly, It is called a Great Salvation, In  
 respect of the continuance and duration of it. It is  
 a salvation which is but for a day; but it is an

eternal Salvation, Heb. 9. 12. *He obtained eternal redemption for us.*

Now the second thing wherunto we shall first clearing of the words, is this, viz. How it is That Christ was the first Preacher of this eternal Salvation. We do not think that the words are thus understood, that the Gospel, and this Great Salvation was never preached before Christ came in flesh; but we think the meaning of the words to be one of these three, if not all of them.

I. First, That all the preaching of this Great Salvation under the Law, did come very far short in point of fulnesse, in comparison of Christs preaching of it; Therefore is Christ said to be the first Preacher of this Great Salvation: As if he had said, I *Adam*, he preached of this Great Salvation; *Eve*, he preached of this Great Salvation; And *twelve Patriarchs*, they preached of this Great Salvation: And all the Prophets who went before Christ and are now in heaven, they preached of this Great Salvation; But all their preaching deserved no name of preaching in comparison of Christs. *Never man spake as he spake.* Thus Christ was the first great preacher of this Great Salvation.

II. Secondly, This may be the meaning that Christ was the first Preacher of this Great Salvation, in respect of his clear way of preaching; for he was the first Preacher of it without Type and Shadows, he was the first Preacher of it clearly, with so much demonstration and power of Spirit.

III. Thirdly, The meaning of this (that Christ was the first Preacher of this Great Salvation) relate to his appearing to *Adam* in Paradise, when he became the first and great Preacher of this Salvation when he did speak the word unto him, *Thou art the first of many that shall tread down the head of the serpent.*

the glorious preaching of this Great Salvation  
when Christ preached it to Adam in Paradise.  
that was the first and glorious morning of this  
Gospel.

we shall speak a little to the first of these  
which we have observed from the words  
there are many within the visible Church  
are neglecters and lighters of this Great Salva-  
(do ye not all take with it?) Is it clear  
towards the close, and Chap. 2. 14  
these persons being invited to come to the mar-  
or feast of the Gospel. It is said of them  
which are the famous words in  
Text. And Luk 14. 18. When they were invited  
come, it is said, *They all with one consent be-  
make their excuse.* And Isa. 66. 2. *This saith  
I will make them weary to see, they will  
yet they will not hear.* Now is there a per-  
son who dare deny this charge, that he is a  
lighter of this Great Salvation? I confess I am  
that ye will not take with it. Therefore I  
speak right sort of persons who are lighters  
of this Great Salvation. And I charge you, as ye  
answer to God one day, that ye search your-  
selves, whether ye be among the number (in the  
number) of the lighters of this Great

The first sort of persons, who are lighters of  
this Great Salvation, are these persons who go about  
with their own righteousness, and will not  
come to the righteousness of Christ. (Chap. 2. 14)  
This sort of persons, who think they may win  
heaven by a Covenant of works, and will not take  
this way of travelling to heaven in the Cove-  
nant of Grace. And surely there is not a person here,  
but that he hath inclination to be as little  
as Christ (for his Salvation) as he can. We

would go to Heaven without the Way, who  
Christ. And [tell me] there are many  
congregations, who go about to establish  
own righteousness. And I shall propose first  
persons who fall under the first rank.

The first sort are these who trust on their  
own strength, and think they will carry them to Heaven.  
These are the persons who go about to establish  
own righteousness. Say they, I defy the  
law, I defy any thing to me, I was evermore as honest  
and I trust therefore that I shall go to Heaven.  
Say to thee, O Gad, that thou art, thou  
never wilt to Heaven by these means, till thou  
to Christ with thine. *All my righteousness is filthy  
rag.*

The second sort are these, who build their  
confidence upon their denial of their good works.  
yet come never this length to make use of  
Christ.

The third sort are these, who build their  
confidence upon their duties. They think they will  
go to Heaven by their good prayers, by their  
and by their fasting. I like unto that  
Law 12. 1. I thank God I am not like those  
for I do not think in the way. I say that of all the  
[?] But I say unto thee, thy duties will never  
take thee to Heaven, if Christ be not the end of  
duties, nor can ye perform any duty  
[?]

The fourth sort of persons who fall under  
first rank of lighters of the Great Salvation,  
who trust on their convictions. If they have  
been convinced of their sin and miserable estate,  
think there is no more to do. Christ will save  
them, so they sit down and hold their  
these convictions.

The fifth sort of persons are these who

confidence upon their resolution. They think  
 because I have resolved to be a better man than I  
 was, therefore I think I will be so. (I will be better than  
 many) that God will accept me with joy for  
 ever. But it had been good for many, such a word  
 had been in the Bible, or that their cooled eyes  
 might have read it. But know this, that though thou  
 make strong resolutions as Peter, or as good willers  
 have had, if thou never labour to bring them  
 to effect, God shall say to thee, *Depart from me, I  
 know you not.* And of you who build upon your re-  
 solutions, ye build upon a sandy foundation, these  
 many times a goodnesse but like the morning  
 dew.

And the fifth sort of persons who fall under  
 the first rank of sighters of the Great Salvation  
 (wherein the evil is most subtil) are these who  
 put their Salvation upon their graces; these also go  
 on to establish their own righteousness. But I  
 say to thee, Thy grace cannot be the foundation of  
 hope, though they may be as evidences to strength-  
 en thy hope. Now are there none here who fall un-  
 der the first rank of sighters of the Great Salvation?  
 Are there none here who will confesse that they  
 are gone about to establish their own righteousness?  
 Are there any who will confesse, put a rope about  
 their neck, and come to Christ; for he is a merciful King  
 and will receive thee; come to Christ with this, will any  
 say, *He is like flaby rag.* And if thou wilt come  
 to him in sincerity, he shall say, *Bring forth the  
 robe and put it on him.* If thou art brought  
 to him in sincerity to Christ, where shall he be  
 between Christ and thee. But, come and stand  
 with the robe on.

Secondly, These persons desire the Great Sal-  
 vation, who stay their taking hold of the promise  
 of the Gospel. For there are many (when

we preach this Gospel, and when we hold out  
 this Great Salvation to some, I will say, I will say  
 unto thee, *Why dost thou delay to take hold of this Great Sal-  
 vation?* But I say to you that (who ever you be) *Why  
 dost thou delay to take hold on this Great Salvation?*  
 are the lighters of it. Is there a person within  
 doors, who dare, but acknowledge that he hath dis-  
 troyed this Great Salvation, and delayed to embrace  
 it? Well, say, What do your consciences speak? Is  
 there any but they must acknowledge they are  
 under this second rank? And I say to you, who  
 are thus delayed, will ye yet embrace it? I say even  
 you who are old men (now past sixty years, &  
 have sought this Great Salvation so long) yet  
 do ye not take hold of this Great Salvation, in offered unto you.  
 What say ye to this? O what do ye say to this?  
 Are ye saying, I must now delay (and not receive  
 this Great Salvation) till my Harvest be by, or  
 over? I say unto thee, that the Harvest of the word  
 of God is ripe, and he shall put in his sickle, and  
 reap them down. I will say no more to these, who  
 slight this Great Salvation, but this, *Why stand ye  
 so long in the Church, yet idle and doing nothing?*  
 will ye as long be induced to take and embrace  
 this Great Salvation, before it be hid from your eyes?

I I I. Thirdly. These persons are the lighters  
 of this Great Salvation, who complement with Christ  
 when they are invited to come and partake of it. I  
 say firstly to the Minister, if (or rather to their  
 consciences) I pray you have me excused in this  
 as these Luk. 14. 18. But I would only ask as I  
 have ye any lawfull excuse, why ye will not  
 come and partake of this Great Salvation? Is there  
 a person here that hath any lawfull excuse to partake  
 I shall never take that off your hand, *Must we  
 But be sure of this, I shall never excuse you.*



Therefore I desire that those persons who have slighted the Great Salvation, by coming to Christ, that they would complements no more to him at all, but now embrace it.

V. The fourth sort of persons who slight this Great Salvation, are these who give way to doubts, fears and unbelief, so that they will not come to the purchase of this Great Salvation: I say, such of you as slight it, and Christ will esteem you such. If ye know the worth and vertue of this Great Salvation, there would not be a temptation (you know more with) that would hinder you from embracing it, but if thou could not answer these temptations, thou would not own them: I say unto such detractors and slighers of the Great Salvation as I have charged persons (*And these who say I am in the bottom of the breaking forth of children*), that when ye shall answer your objections, which hinder you from closing with Christ, I intreat you should answer as ye heard them none. Say ye, I will go to this well. I say, it is both lawfull and expedient for us to use the practice of believing *Abraham*, He who believed in his own body, being dry as an old tree. *Martha*, the daughter of *Sarabs* womb. He did not consider those things which might have been objections to him from believing. He might have started at two objections, *Alas, I am old, and that objection could he not answer: And my wife is past all hearing, neither could he answer that objection.* or then did he with them? He slighted them in his heart, and considered them not. Secondly, I would say this to you, who thus slight it because of diseases or infirmities, If ye did know the worth of the Great Salvation which is in this Gospel, ye would not doubt to go through, ye would go through them, and have a drink of the water of this well of *Babylon*.

V. The fifth sort of persons who slight Great Salvation, are those who will not do as they are bid, and give pains to hear this Great Salvation offered unto them, for there are some persons (if they come to the Church) desire to sit farthest and so never take care to hear a word of this Great Salvation: And such are dreadful slightrers of God. Take unto these mentioned, Jer. 6. 10. *To whom I shall speak and give warning, that they may hear, but they will not; their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hear.* Isa. 28. 12. *But they would not hear,* Jer. 7. 10. *For we are delivered to do all these abominations, they did come and stand before him in the House which was called by his Name.*

V I. Sixthly, These persons are slightrers of Great Salvation, (who when they hear it) are more (may not so much) affected with it, than they were telling unto them the most sensible story of Thomas the Martyr, or some other old fable. Take unto these mentioned, Jer. 6. 10. *The word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it.* I would put you all as in the sight of the Author of this Great Salvation, (men or women) did ever set your selves (or took ye ever pains) to take up your hearts to the love of this Great Salvation. Was it ever the rejoycing of your hearts that Christ dyed and rose again? I do certainly believe it, (I am perswaded) that there are decrees past in heaven against many of you, That in hearing ye shall not understand, and in seeing ye shall not perceive, For God hath made your hearts harder then the Flint or Adamant; so that ye refuse to return when he doth exhort you. Remember, (if I may so speak) I think there is as much probability that the stones in the wall would hear as we would speak to them) as soon as many of you.

V I I. Seventhly, These persons are slightrers of

Salvation; who did never complain that they had a right to this Great Salvation. I hope some are now convinced that ye never came within compass of this Great Salvation: Linger ye not, if ye did never spend one hour in secret weeping and lamenting, because ye had not a right to this Great Redemption, it is but too probable, you never yet a right to it. Yea, know it, that such of you would little care to let precious Christ depart without grief of heart; I think if this were voiced within this house to day, whether or no, shall Christ go and depart, I doubt if there would be many Heart-converters, though many Tongue dissenters. Oh, how many there would be many hearts here, saying, O Christ depart and go thy way: yea, there are many persons here, who prefer their kine and swine to precious Christ; and would beseech him to go out of their

midst. Rightly, These persons slight the Great Salvation, who never took pains to engage their hearts to take hold of Christ and the Gospel. Christ is dear to you this day: The Great Salvation is dear to you, and is now offered unto you: Therefore are there any who will take pains to lay hold on this precious Christ; on all who are here, by the beauty and excellency of him who is the Author of this Great Salvation, that ye come and partake of it; I abstain by all the joyes of heaven that ye embrace this Great Salvation, I abstain you by all the terrors in hell, that ye embrace it, I abstain you by the promises of the new Testament, that ye embrace it, I abstain you by all the curses which are written in this Book of the Covenant, that ye embrace it, I abstain you by the love ye owe to your immortal souls, that ye would come to your wife, and come and partake of the Great Salvation. May I now have it, saith thou? Yea, I say unto you all, ye may have it to day, if ye be pen-

where of it before ye go hence. And so before I proceed any further, I do in the Name and Authority of him who sent me here to day, (and as the Author of this Great Salvation) freely offer it unto you. Therefore take it off my hand; embrace this Great Salvation offered to you to day. But I know there will be eight sorts of humors (within this house to day) in relation to this Great Salvation which is offered unto you.

1. I think there will be some of Gallio's disposition here to day, that will care for none of these things. Yes, there are many here who will give a fig for this rich offer of the Great Salvation. But, I say, cursed be that person who puts on Gallio's contempt (to day) that will care for none of these things.

2. I fear there will be many of Pilate's humor here (to day) who will say, they find nothing against the man; yet will cry forth, Take him, and crucify him. They find no fault with Christ, yet will be content that he be crucified. Now ye say anything against Christ, who is the Author of this Great Salvation? Produce your strong arguments; are there any here who have anything to say against Him? I am here to answer in His Name. I hope there is not one here who hath anything to say against the Author of this Great Salvation; why then do ye not take Him? See unto your selves that there be none of Pilate's humor here to day. I will cry out, *To find nothing in Christ why he should not be received, and yet will be content, that he be crucified.*

3. There will be many of the Jews humor to day, who cry forth, *Away with Christ; crucify Christ, and give me Barabbas.* But on what a word is that, *Away with Spoulesse Christ, and give us the world!* I say,

## *The Great Salvation.*

111

any here who will be so gross, dishonest as this Great Salvation? Will ye slight this Great Salvation, and embrace your idols, which shall once prove a snare of thorns unto you?

There will be some of Felix humor found here to day, that will say, O Christ, go away at this time, I will bear thee at a more convenient season; But say unto you who will not hear me to day, nor embrace this Great Salvation, I shall defy all the ministers in Scotland to assure you, that ye shall get no better offer, if ye send me away to day. There is none that can, or dare, engage, that the Great Salvation shall be in your offer any more: Therefore to day, let none of Felix temper be here to day, that will say, They will bear Christ at a more convenient season.

There will be some of Balaams temper (to day) who will desire To see the death of the righteous, and to have their last end like his; yet they desire not the life of the righteous. But I say unto you, ye shall never die the death of the righteous, if ye embrace the life of the righteous.

There will be some of you here (to day) who will say, I am almost persuaded, I will be a Christian; I say unto thee, O will thou quickly cut with the sword almost, and put the wound into a wound, and say, O precious Christ, I will be a Christian; I will be a Christian; However, I will not say, I will be a Christian; I intreat thee come this day, and thou may cry out, I am almost persuaded to embrace the Great Salvation, and may be as long ye shall come further.

There will be some of Judas temper here (to day) who will betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver; they would sell Christ, Heaven, their idols, for thirty pieces of silver.

3. I think

9. I think there will be many of *Esau* present here ( to day ) who will sell their birth-right for a mess of pottage. Now will ye enquire at yourselves, am I the person that will give my birth-right for a mess of pottage? Doth my heart say, I will give up my birth-right, because I am hungered and ready to die? what will it profit me? Give me a mess of pottage, and I will quite my birth-right. I know it, there are not a few such here to day; Therefore I intreat you, enquire at your selves what is your humor. Oh shall the Great Salvation, that ye have sought so long, be slighted this day also, and shall there be none to embrace it? Oh inquire, and stand in awe lest the wrath of the most High pursue you.

Now I shall give you these seven considerations which may provoke you not to slight (but embrace) this Great Salvation.

I. The first Consideration, That the not embracing of this Great Salvation is one of the greatest acts of folly that can be, *Jer. 8. 9. They have rejected the word of the Lord,* ( and immediately is subjoined ) *And, what wisdom is in them? And so Solomon* do assure you they cannot be wise who neglect this Great Salvation, *Prov. 1. 7. Fools despise wisdom and instruction,* Therefore, may not I say unto you, who ye will (though ye were the greatest heads of wit in all this place) ye are but stark fools as long as ye neglect this. But would ye be wise indeed, be wise unto eternal life? then I intreat you come and embrace this Great Salvation.

II. The second Consideration, to provoke you not to slight the Great Salvation, is this, that the ruine and destruction of the slighers of it, is certain and infallible *Jer. 31. 31. Where* ( speak I ) *of slighting the Covenant, which is indeed this Great Salvation ) there is a therefore put to the saying: Therefore thus saith the Lord, I will bring evil*

which they shall be able to see. I defy you all  
are the fingers of the Great Salvation, to find  
back door, when falling that pass you: for there  
door to escape if ye embrace not this Great Salva-  
tion. But the earth will disclose your iniquity, and heaven  
will declare your sin.

III. Thirdly, Let this Consideration provoke  
you not to slight this Great Salvation, that Christ is  
resembling serious, and earnest that ye would embrace  
it. And I think that, *Isa. 18. 21.* speaketh out his  
resembling seriousness: where four times he beggeth  
his hearers, that they would give ear and hear his  
voice (saying) *Give ear and hear my voice, and  
hear my speech.* What needeth all these exhorta-  
tions? But that Christ is most serious, and earnest  
ye should embrace the Great Salvation. And O that  
there were a person here (to day) as serious to the  
work as Christ is / But, be who ye will that slight  
this Great Salvation, (believe me) the day is com-  
ing wherein ye shall cry out, alas for my slighting of  
it. Wilt thou therefore think presently what I say  
(O thou slighter of this Great Salvation) what wilt  
thou say of thy slighting of it, when the devil shall be  
leading thee up thorow these dark gates of hell? O  
thou slighter of the Gospel, how many places wilt thou  
say: when thou shalt be passing thorow these dark  
gates into thy everlasting prison; Wilt thou not then  
say, (O me slighter of the everlasting Salvation)  
where am I now going; Alas, now for my slight-  
ing the Gospel: And as thou passest thorow, thou  
shalt meet with numbers of miserable comforters,  
there is not one in that prison who can comfort  
thee. But many dreadfull places shall thou then both  
see and hear; if thou embrace not this Great Salva-  
tion.

IV. Fourthly, Let this provoke you not to slight  
this Great Salvation, that ye will get it for a very  
little.



look. O ye who have not done so day, ye will not see this Great Salvation for one look, *Isa. 45: 13.* I will come unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth shall say, every look ye will get this Great Salvation; and ye ever think to get Heaven at a lower rate?

V. The fifth Consideration, to provoke you not to slight this Great Salvation any more, is this, That is not one of you who is a slighter of it, but ye slighting it shall increase your immortal bonds. Man or Woman, be who thou wilt, when thou art slighting this Great Salvation, thou art busying a snare wherewith to bind thy soul eternally in these unquenchable flames, *Isa. 48: 22.* Be ye not mockers, lest your heads be made strong: I say therefore unto you, old men, mock not, lest your heads be made strong; old women, near unto your graves, mock not, lest your heads be made strong; young men, be ye not mockers, lest your heads be made strong; Young women, who are in the flower of your time, mock not, lest your heads be made strong. But now also will there (for all this) be a person here to day who will be a mocker of this Great Salvation?

VI. The sixth Consideration, to provoke you not to slight this Great Salvation any more, is this, We know not but that your days may become a close day, ye know not, but the day of the publishing of this Great Salvation may be near unto a close. What knowest thou, O man or woman, but this may be the last Sermon that ever thou shalt hear concerning this Great Salvation? And yet for all this, O ye we be sent away without one consent to embrace and receive it? O will ye be persuaded to look to Christ and so to take him?

VII. The seventh consideration, to provoke you not to slight the Great Salvation, is this, that this is a five-fold Salvation comprehended under this Great Salvation.

The first is this, *come and partake of this Great Salvation*, and thou shalt have *Salvation from thy captivity*: and hereby I do proclaim liberty (this day) unto you captives: I am sent forth (this day) with the keyes of your prison-house, to open your prison doors unto you, if ye will embrace this Great Salvation. I say unto you, *O ye prisoners, come forth and open your selves*; for the keyes of your prison house are with us to open your prison doors unto you, therefore *O come forth and embrace this Great Salvation*, will there be any (shall I think) here that will refuse to come forth, *O go forth and flee from the land of your captivity, and from the house of your bondage.*

II. Thou shalt have Salvation from thy darkness, and from thy ignorance: I say unto you who understand no more of God then the stones in the wall, I command you to come forth, and partake yet of this Great Salvation; and unto you shall light arise, even as the Day Spring from on high shall visit you.

III. If ye will come and partake of this Great Salvation, ye shall have deliverance from all your忧愁. Dost thou fear that thou shalt be poor, and cannot partake of this Great Salvation, and thou shalt be delivered from it. Art thou afraid of hell? Come and partake of this Great Salvation, and thou shalt be delivered from that fear. Art thou afraid at the wrath of God? Then come (I say) and partake of this Great Salvation, and thou shalt have redemption from that and all thy fears, *With him is plenteous redemption, and he can make thee quiet from the fear of*

IV. If thou wilt come and partake of this Salvation, thou shalt have deliverance from all thy troubles, and from all thy cares; ye see how careful and how much about many things, Come and partake of this Great Salvation, and it will make you *careless* for the *nothing necessary*. *Do not ye therefore*

1. If ye will come and embrace this Great Salvation offered unto you this day, ye shall be happy. How ye go about to beg this day, O what advantage shall it give you, where is thy strength? Now, O ye come and embrace this Great Salvation, and shall be more than conquerors therein Christ who loves you. Are there therefore any here to day that will have victory over the devil, and over their own hearts? Then come and embrace this Great Salvation, when your victory is certain.

But now to press home this Great Salvation unto you a little further, there are nine sorts of persons who are invited to come and partake of this Great Salvation offered this day. And I charge you answer to your names when ye are called, and delay not to come.

I. First, I invite and call hereto day, all who are willing to come and embrace this Great Salvation. Now, are there any of you hereto day, who are named willing? Then I invite you to come and embrace this Great Salvation, Rev. 22. 17. *Whoever will, let him come.* But oh, are there none here to day who are named willing? I intreat you, if there be any who are weary of your name, but come when you are called and embrace this Great Salvation.

II. Secondly, These persons who thirst for it, are invited to come, and partake of this Great Salvation. Rev. 22. 17. *Let him that is athirst, come.* Now, are there any here who are named athirst, let them come and partake of this Salvation, and they shall be satisfied.

III. Thirdly, Are there any moneyless folks here to day? Let them come and partake of this Great Salvation. Are there any moneyless folks here to day? Is it not that money or gold in your purses? Where is your money? There is, want ye righteousness? Then I pray you come, and partake of this Great Salvation.

I say, are ye so poor, that ye have nothing to buy the fear of hell? Then I pray you come. If there be any here who have nothing to buy, and them so poor, but necessary, I say unto all such, O come, and partake of this Great Salvation.

IV. Fourthly, These persons are invited to come (and I wish there were many such) who are weary. Are there none here to day who are called weary? Are ye not weary in pursuit of your sin? If there be any such here to day, I say unto you, O weary, come, come, come, and partake of this Great Salvation, and of this excellent Gospel Redemption that was purchased at so dear a rate.

V. Fifthly, These who are heavy laden are invited to come (and I think all of you may answer in this name) are ye heavy laden? O then come, are there none here who are heavy laden with sin, with misery, and estrangement from God? If there be any such here, I say unto thee, old man, or young man, be who thou wilt, O come and partake of this Great Salvation.

VI. Sixthly, Are there any here to day who are called blind? I say, if there be any of you who have no eyes to see the precious Gospel that is offered, I invite you to come and partake of this Great Salvation.

VII. Seventhly, Are there any who are called lame here to day? I say unto such, O come, come, and partake of this Great Salvation. For we are glad to day, to call in the blind and the lame, and at the same time that they may come and embrace this Gospel of Salvation: Therefore, are there none here to day who are called lame. Are ye neither blind nor lame? Are many of you will not deny that ye are such? Therefore I say unto you, O blind, lame and halt, come, come, and partake of this Great Salvation.

VIII. The eighth sort of persons invited are the

who are sick; therefore, if there be any sick here, let them who are well, as for as they are able, come and visit them, that they may be comforted by the word of the Lord, and by the prayers of the brethren, and that they may be able to give an account of their sins, and of the grace of God, and of the love of the brethren, and of the peace of the church, and of the joy of the Lord, and of the glory of the Father, and of the Kingdom of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and of the life of the world to come, Amen.

I X. Ninthly, As there are here to day who know not their name or their condition, I say unto you nameless folk, come and partake of this Great Supper, come to Christ for the knowledge of your condition, come as a nameless one, and he shall reject thee, though thy case were so evil that he could not give it a name; for, *Of all that come unto him he will cast none away.*

Now where do you find your name and firm? O do ye not know it? I hope now ye may know therefore I must you answer to it, and so come to the purchase of this Great Salvation. (John 1:12)

I am afraid there be many strong iron, bars  
in way of some of you, which ye cannot win  
by your self are some souls locked in Satans fire  
And therefore I shall speak a little for discovering  
the causes, that hinder from embracing this  
Salvation, that so ye may be the better helped  
to overcome them.

The first great iron-bar which keepeth folk from embracing this Great Salvation, is the bar of Ignorance; and I am afraid that this (as a mighty hinderer) many of you: Ye are ignorant of yourselves, and of the condition of your souls, ye are ignorant of the Law and of its severity, and ye are ignorant of the precious Gospel in its condescension. O pray unto God that for Christs sake, he would break that great bar of ignorance, for till that be done Christ may take up that complaint, Jer. 4. 22. *They are foolish, they know not the way of the Lord, the judgement of their God.* I say, this bar of ignorance keepeth you from embracing this Great Salvation.

IV. The second bar which keepeth many from embracing this Great Salvation, is the bar of presumption. For many will cry out, what need have I to embrace this Great Salvation? Have I it not already? Am I any poorer than thee, O fool, thou art (by all appearance) yet I am wiser. O that this evil bar of presumption were always; for this one of the greatest impediments which lyeth in the way of your embracing this Great Salvation, is in your offer to do it. Therefore I say unto you, if you will come no further, I leave you at this length, to confess that ye want this Gospel salvation, and that ye are indeed strangers to the Redemption purchased by Christ.

V. The third bar that keepeth persons from embracing this Great Salvation, is the bar of unbelief. I believe not what we say to you about this Great Salvation: I know that some of you are of the Stoic or Epicure's humor, who cry out, What matters it to me? He seemeth to be the better sort of some strange God. But I say unto you, I am not the better sort of some strange God, but it is Jesus of Nazareth whom I send unto you. Alas, some of you thinketh that this Great Salvation to be some morning dream, or some idle fancy; but I say unto you, it is neither a dream nor a fancy, but a real truth that we preach unto you.

VI. The fourth bar that keepeth persons from embracing of this Great Salvation, is the bar of discouragement: This strong bar keepeth many so that they cannot embrace this Great Salvation, though it be freely offered unto them. I shall say more to you who are such; but counsel you to do as these four lepers did, 2 King. 7. 4. *For at the gate of Samaria, who said, Why sit we here till we die; if we say, we will open into the city, then the famine is in the City, and we shall die: and if we sit still here, we die also.* Now

the first bar, and let us fall into the net of the devil. If they fall we shall be saved, but if they fall not, we shall be damned. Even so it is with you, that if ye abide in the state of unbelief, shall surely be undone; therefore go for ye know not but God may work a Great Salvation for you: and if ye will quine your unbelief, close with Christ in the offer of this Great Salvation (by faith) ye shall have no more to do, eat and drink, and divide the Spoil: *ye shall be saved.*

VI. The fifth bar which withholdeth people from embracing of this Great Salvation, is the bar of unwillingnesse. *Ye will not come to me, saith the Lord, ye may have life.* And alas that is an iron bar indeed, by which all that are in hell have bound themselves out of heaven. Alas, shall ye be saved wretches also. O what a dreadful sound is this! *Ye will not.* O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be saved? When shall it once be? Ah, Turn you, ye Jews, why will ye die? Why will ye slight the Great Salvation? O will none of you this embrace it!

VII. The sixth bar that withholdeth people from embracing this Great Salvation, is the bar of worldly mindednesse: many of you are so fixed in the world, that ye cannot come and close with this Great Salvation. I may allude to that which is spoken of Saul, 1 Sam. 10. 22. that he *did himself among the fesse*: for many have buried and bound themselves in the midst of the world, that they cannot embrace this Great Salvation.

VIII. The seventh bar which keepeth many from embracing this Great Salvation, is the bar of hardness of heartnesse: there hath such a stupidity and hardness of heart seized upon many, that, let God preach as he will to them (by his Word, or by other dispensations) they are no more moved, then if his Word and dispensations were a dead



...from them. O the strength of hands  
...when shall the omnipotent hand  
...break it?

...will. The eighth bar that hindereth many from  
...this Great Salvation, is the bar of fear-  
...Many of you cannot be at this pains to  
...it: but I say unto you, there is but small  
...in the way of Godliness: I say unto you, it  
...so easily to had, that it is in your offer to day  
...if ye will, ye may put forth your hand and take

...Consider therefore what ye will do. O will  
...despise it? I say will ye still neglect and despise  
...will ye but read this dreadfull word, *Behold ye*

*Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish.*  
...me freely, would ye have us to return this  
...to him who sent us, that ye are despisers

...the Great Salvation? Say to it, Are there none  
...you, who (for all this) will consent to per-  
...of this Great Salvation? O captives and pri-  
...ners, and ye who are in the bonds of Satan, will

...come and partake of this Great Salvation, and  
...shall be made free. I have an act of release  
...you to day: If ye will come, and make use of

...ye shall be set at liberty. But, Oh shall the  
...prison doors be cast open, and yet none come  
...forth? But that (I may come to a close) I say

...unto you, O poor prisoners go forth, go forth,  
...and partake of this Great Salvation. Oh, will ye  
...come forth? What holdeth you in? The

...foundation of your prison-house is shaken to day,  
...therefore if ye will but come forth and cast your

...Christ, your very shackles shall fall off your  
...and ye shall be as those who were never  
...bound. Now I leave this with you: and require

...think upon it, I shall speak these few words  
...unto you, and I intreat you think upon them.  
...First, I have excellent tidings to tell you  
...I hope some of you will give ear to them) we

There

There is a great Person come here to day, and  
 is the mighty Author of this Great Salvation.  
 hath brought everlasting righteousness with  
 himself, and he desires you to make use thereof: It is his will  
 that ye would take his excellent Gift of Life.  
 Therefore I say, are the things that I have to say  
 unto you: and I hope never to be declared  
 for what I preach unto you: I say yet unto you  
 that Christ, the Author of the Great Salvation  
 desireth to give it freely unto you, if ye will  
 take it. But O will ye not take it? I think  
 ye will see an hundred men lying in prison,  
 dungeons, without all light, bread, or water,  
 a great Prince coming to them, saying, I desire  
 you all to come forth, and partake of this Great  
 Liberty which I bring unto you: and every one  
 of them should answer, I scorn to come forth at  
 this: would ye not think them exceeding  
 foolish? And yet I fear this act of great folly  
 is done in many of your hands to day: that when  
 Christ hath given us the keys of your prison doors,  
 and they are opened, ye will not come forth.  
 But I must exhort you yet to come forth and free  
 your selves; For who knoweth, but we may be  
 commanded to shut your prison doors again, and  
 to seal them with seven seals: with an unalterable  
 decree from heaven, never to be recalled? When  
 for? O ye prisoners, *go forth, go forth* from your  
 prison house.

2. Secondly, I would say this to you, that  
 not without much ground that this Salvation  
 (offered to you) is called a Great Salvation.  
 know a little Paper of two or three sheets,  
 contain all the salvation that ever any man  
 will: but the world would not be able to  
 all the Books which might be written to the  
 commendation of this Great Salvation; yea,  
 any who will embrace it) I say, First,

that this Salvation above thy faith, then go thy way when thou art come; But I know thou wilt find it above thy faith and hope. Secondly, thou shalt find it not above thy desires when thou art come unto it, then go thy way again; but with thy desires as the sand upon the sea shore; thou shalt always find more in this Salvation then ever thou could desire. Thirdly, If this Salvation be above what thou can conceive, then go thy way when thou art come to it; But think of it as thou can; it shall always be above thy thoughts. Fourthly, If this Salvation be not above thy opinion of it, then go thy way when thou art come unto it; but I know thou wilt find it far above thy opinion of it. Therefore seeing it is so great a Salvation, as that all the world could not contain all the Books might be written in the commendation of it; O will ye embrace it, even while it is in your offer.

Thirdly, I would say this unto you, be persuaded, that there is no sin that will more provoke the Majesty of God to punish you, then the sin of slighting the Great Salvation. Bring forth ye murderers, saith the Lord (of the highest and best invitation) and slay them before me. I know you enquire at your hearts, what ye will answer when ye are reproved for slighting of it. Men, will ye ask at your own hearts, what ye will answer to Christ when he shall propose a question to you, Why slighted ye the Great Salvation? Old women, what will ye answer when he shall say to you, why slighted ye the Great Salvation? Young men, and young women, what will ye answer at your own hearts what ye will answer when Christ shall say to you, why slighted ye the Great Salvation? Can ye imagine any more of this question? O dreadful shall the wrath of God be that shall be executed upon the sinners that slight the Great Salvation?

4. Fourthly, I would say this unto you, heaven is waiting to hear, what acceptance offer of this Great Salvation doth get among you. Here is the Great Salvation, here is the offer of it, and here is the commendation of it; what yet to it? Is it not an excellent Salvation? Is it not a free Salvation? Is it not a Great Salvation? Is it not an eternal Salvation? Why then do ye not welcome it? Can any of you say any thing to the discommendation of it? I know you cannot. Yes I dare say your own hearts are admiring it most excellent; And therefore, O will ye accept it. Alas, shall there be none here who will be found accepters of this Great Salvation, so freely offered to day?

5. Fifthly, I would say this to you, let all Angels praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. All the Saints round about the Throne praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. All the Angels who are expectants of heaven praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. All ye O whom this offer is made, praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. O heave, praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. O all ye fowls of the air, praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. O fire, O sun, O moon, O vapours, O stormy winds and tempests, praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. All the tribes of the earth, praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. O ye men, praise him who is the Author of this Great Salvation, and all that is within us bless him who is the Author of this Great Salvation. O who will not praise Him, who is the Author of this Great Salvation? Are there any here that will be so foolish to commend him? O think upon him, and not this be a day of slighting him? Now what are your hearts at this time? I will tell you what

of your hearts are, they are thinking upon the  
 but I am sure there are not many of them  
 upon this Great Salvation. Now what reso-  
 mind ye to go away with to day? Are there  
 resolution beyond what ye had when ye came  
 to day? Are there any here who have this re-  
 son. *To whom shall we go, but to him who is the Au-  
 of this Great Salvation, who alone hath the words  
 of eternal life? Even the Lord breath it upon you.*  
 is this your resolution, that through Christ  
 strength (for sake him who will) ye will never forsake  
 Or have ye this resolution, That ye will esteem  
 highly of the Great Salvation then even ye did? O  
 the Lord may keep these in the imaginations of the  
 of your hearts for ever. But as for you who have  
 resolutions to embrace this Great Salvation, O  
 with shall I commend it unto you? Do not  
 own necessities commend it? But if nothing  
 persuade you to come away and embrace it,  
 this place shall be a heap of witnesses against  
 For it hath heard all the words of the Law which  
 hath spoken unto you, Josh. 24.

At least your eyes upon these pillars of the house,  
 stones in the walls: I take them as so many wit-  
 nesses, that they may speak, and testify against you  
 the great day of the Lord, if ye neglect this Great  
 Salvation to day. Therefore as ye go away be think-  
 ing upon it, and whether or not ye mind to be-  
 lieve it now while you may have it. This day I have  
 life and death before you: I have set before you  
 the Great Salvation and the great damnation.  
 O that ye had understanding in all these things,  
 ye being wise might be provoked at heart to  
 embrace this Great Salvation, the which was set be-  
 fore you so thick upon. Is not heaven before  
 you at this time, to see what ye will do  
 with this great offer of Salvation which I have set  
 before you (the Lord) presented unto you I have, or

Him that can perswade you to embrace this Salvation, this Gospel Redemption, this blessed liberty into which the Angels desire to fly, and who can bring you back from the pit, and can enlighten you with the light of the living? To Him who has the keyes of your prison, Who can open and shut, and can shut and none can open; To Him, who has all power in Heavens and in Earth communicate; who can deliver you from the power of the Grave, and set you free from all your enemies, we desire to praise, Amen.

## S E R M O N II.

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first was spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.*

**T**Here are two great and most ordinary complaints in these dayes. 1. There are many who complain, that their Estates and Children are in bondage, and that they are for slaves to the hands of Strangers: But, O that they could also turn over the complaint to this, that their souls are in bondage, and that we are yet in the land of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, that we might be provoked to long for the Great Salvation that is in our offer. 2. There are many complaints (and not without much cause) that there is a great proliferation of Errors: But, O will they complain also of this, that within thy heart there is a proliferation of lusts; is there not an act of rebellion concluded within thy breast, that the devil and his company may reigne in thee and pleasure? O that we had need of Great Salvation, shall I tell you, Christ is courting you to embrace it, and that

on all his most glorious robes, and himself  
 offereth unto you, as a suitor making offer of himself  
 of his Great Salvation. O tell us, have ye seen  
 him? Or do ye think to see him this day? What  
 had he on? There are five glorious Robes  
 wherewith he cloaths himself, when he appeareth  
 to manifest himself to his people. First, He  
 cometh to his own with the garments of Salvation,  
 according to that word, Zech. 9. verse 9. *Rejoice, O  
 daughter of Sion greatly, shout O daughter of Jerusalem  
 for behold, thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and  
 saving Salvation; say your King is come here to day,*  
 will you not fall in love with him when he is  
 clothed with the garments of Salvation? can ye  
 have a more conquering sight of Christ, than  
 when he is clothed with such an excellent Robe,  
 offering you Salvation? Secondly, He appeareth  
 in his own sometimes in garments dyed in blood, ac-  
 cording to that word, *Isa. 63. v. 1, 2. Who is this  
 that cometh up from Edom with dyed garments in blood,  
 that treadeth the wine vat: And now I like to  
 see that will not look to Christ when he appears  
 in the garments of Salvation, have ye a heart to ac-  
 cept of him, that have sought such a combat for you,  
 who hath trode the wine-press alone, and hath clothed  
 all his garments with the blood of his enemies?  
 Is there any here who dare refuse this Salvation,  
 when they see how he treadeth his enemies in anger,  
 and trampleth them in his fury, and thus sprinkles  
 blood upon his garments. O trample as can fight,  
 seek quarter from him in time, or he shall dye  
 your garments with the blood of thy iniquities.  
 Thirdly, Christ appeareth unto his own, being  
 clothed with these humble Robes of meekness  
 when he came in the similitude of sinful flesh.  
 What sight was that, to behold the Father of heav-  
 en clothed with our nature? What sight was  
 that, to behold him that was clothed with light,*



with a garment, to be clothed with our righteousness; yet he condescended to cloath himself thus, that we might have access unto Him, and be partakers of His gifts; O can we refuse Him, when love has thus pressed him to put on the beggar weed, he might say to worms, ye are my brethren, and to flars. Fourthly, Christ sometimes manifested Himself, being clothed with the garments of meekness, and ravishing Majesty; such was the fight the Spouse got of Christ, Song. 2. vers. 8. *As an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons; and Song. 5. when she saw Whits and ruddy, and the standard bearer of redemption and such was that joyful fight of Him, when his garments were as the light, and white as snow which he had at the Transfiguration, when these glorified ones did come (as it were) Angels and saints from that higher house to wake him up, and: fifthly, Christ he sometimes appeared in his own, in Robes of dreadful Majesty, and terrible brightness and loveliness, when the soul upon first sight of him remains dead, and there remains no more life in them; Such was the fight the Spouse got, in his 10. Chapter, and such was the fight the Jews got of Christ, Rev. 1. vers. 17. And I will ask at all that are here, what a fight have ye got of Christ to day, in which of all these robes have ye seen Him in? Is it true, we are not now to look for the extraordinary fights of Him; But yet if ye have not seen him in any of his wooing Robes, he hath appeared matchlesse, and how shall ye refuse him?*

But now to come to the words I was speaking unto you of. The first is in the words, so will ye; there are many who live under the offer of Gods salvation that do slight it, and do not take it; And now I shall only add a few things to what I have said. Let me propose a few Considerations

will make you to imbrace the Great Salvation: And would we go away before we imbrace this Gospel of Salvation: And therefore, I charge you in his Name, to come away before ye imbrace it. And to presse home upon you, there are these eight or nine properties of this Great Salvation, that is offered unto you this day.

And first, It is a *free Salvation*, ye have no more to do, but to put forth your hand and take it: O come and take it: Christ hath fought for this Salvation, and there is no more required of you, but to come and reap the fruits of his victory; When he will, let him come, there is nothing that should move you to stay away, O captives, bond slaves & prisoners, O prisoners of hope, will ye come and partake of the Great Salvation; what hold you from coming away and partaking of it? It is freely offered unto you: ay, believe it, Christ requires no more of you, but that ye should come and take it: Out of your heart, If ye consent to obey, the bargain is made, ye shall eat the good of the land, Isa. x.

Secondly, This Great Salvation, is a complete Salvation, that is offered unto you to day, this is written, Luke xi. vers. 17. That we might be saved from every enemy, and from the hand of all that hate us: there is not any enemy that is in any way, but it shall come and partake of the Great Salvation, nothing may have victory over it, so complete a Salvation is it, that is in your offer this day, O shall ye come away, and not imbrace it? O shall ye undervalue this complete Salvation, shall ye come to your door? believe it, Salvation is offered unto you, if ye will take it.

Thirdly, It is a *wonderful Salvation*, it is higher a Salvation as the Angels desireth to pry into it, and it is such a Salvation, that all the Prophets desire to be brought into it: It is almost six thousand years since the Angels in heaven fell into a Sea of wonder

in this Great Salvation; It is almost six thousand years  
 Since *Abel* fell into a Sea of wonder in this Great Sal-  
 vation: And what think ye is his exercise in this? He  
 is even wondering at this Great Salvation; Would ye  
 ask at all the Angels in heaven, would they not say,  
 O embrace the Great Salvation; Would ye ask at all  
 the Saints that are above, would they not advise you  
 to embrace the Great Salvation: Would ye ask *Adam*,  
 would he not say, O embrace this Great Salvation:  
 Could ye ask at *Abel*, would he not say, O embrace  
 this Great Salvation: And would not all the Patriarchs  
 say unto you, O embrace the Great Salvation: And do  
 not all that have tasted of the sweetness of it, cry out  
 unto you, Come and embrace the Great Salvation.

The fourth property of His salvation is, that it is  
 bought at an exceeding dear rate, it is a dear sal-  
 vation. Would ye know the difference between Christ  
 coming to this Salvation, and your coming to it, I say  
 this; Christ was forced to travel through all the  
 mists of the Justice of God; He was forced to drink  
 the cup of the wrath of God, before he could com-  
 purchase this Great Salvation; and now what is requir-  
 ed of you, to obtain this, we may say no more, but  
 take your hands and take it; will ye look to the price  
 that was laid down for this Salvation, there is no  
 wound in the Body of Christ, but it saith, This is  
 dear Salvation; There is not a reproach Christ  
 without it saith, O it is this a dear Salvation? This  
 is not a suffering Christ met with; but it saith, O  
 but this a dear Salvation? There is not a necessity  
 he is put into, but it saith, Is not this a great and  
 Salvation. O Sirs, will ye not come and take this  
 Great Salvation, this dear Salvation. What must ye  
 give for it say ye? I say, ye must give nothing for it,  
 come and take it without money, and without price,  
 was dear to Christ, but it shall be cheap unto you,  
 is it not cheap to you? I assure you, if you will

## The Great Salvation.

223

to buy the Great Salvation, there is none that needeth to stand for the price of it. *O* come and take it, and have it, and there shall be no prizing.

Fifthly, It is an everlasting Salvation, that ye shall enjoy the fruits of it throughout eternity, as is clear, *Heb.* 2. 13. *He became the author of eternal redemption* to us; it is a Salvation that the devil can never be able to take out of your hand, if ye take it, ye shall never be robbed of it again. *O* come and partake of this Great Salvation, whereby the gates of hell shall never prevail against you.

Sixthly, It is an noble and honourable Salvation; it is not to be taken out of one slavery to another, but it is to be taken out of prison that we may sing, *Luk.* 2. 25. *73. compared with verb. 74. it is, Thus we being freed, may serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness, all the dayes of our life.* I say, *Come, come, and partake of this Great Salvation, that your glory may be increased, and that ye may be exalted above the Kings of the earth.*

Seventhly, It is a most advantageous Salvation; what are the advantages of any Salvation that can be found in this? is there not peace to be found through this Salvation? is there not liberty to be found through this Salvation? is there not eternal enjoyment of God to be found through this Salvation? yea, all Salvations are in this one Salvation.

Eighthly, It is a royal Salvation, for it cometh to us from God through the son of God: Christ is the Author of it, and we conceive, Christ may be said to be the Author of this Salvation, in these respects, 1. He is the meritorious cause that did procure it, it was the price of his blood that was laid down for to purchase this Great Salvation. 2. He is the fountain from whence it floweth, according to that word which we have cited, *Heb.* 2. 12. *He became the Author of eternal Salvation.* 3. He is the

prayer that stretch our spirits for partaking of it, and to clear them with mountains out of the way, that we may have full access unto the Great Salvation. 4. He must must persuade our hearts to embrace and take hold of it. He standeth without, and cryeth in to the heart, Embrace the Great Salvation; And he standeth without, striking thy heart try our, *Consent*, I will embrace the Great Salvation; He is indeed the person that commendeth, and doth point forth this Great Salvation unto us, He is the noble Minister of it, it began first to be preached by him.

Now, is there any of you that have fallen in with the Great Salvation: that ye may try your selves I shall give you some evidences of the persons that are near unto this Great Salvation. 1. Is thy estimation of the Great Salvation increased, be what it was in the morning when thou camest hither? Is thy estimation of the great Gospel Salvation a foot higher then it was in the morning? I say unto thee, thou art not far from the Great Salvation, Come away. 2. Is thy desire after the Great Salvation increased be what it was in the morning? Hast thou stronger desires after the Great Salvation then before thou camest hither? that is an evidence thou art not far from it. 3. Is thy thoughts of thy need of the Great Salvation greater then they were: Think thou that thou hast more need of the Great Salvation then ever thou thoughtest before? And is thy opinion and thoughts of saving thy self, lesse then they were before thou camest hither? Art thou forced to cry out, *Lord Christ can save me*? I say thou art not far from the Great Salvation. Will thou come away. O that ye would once seal this conclusion with much heart persuasion, *we are undone without Christ*, who is the Author of the Great Salvation. Are there any of you that are sensible that ye are in the fetters of sin, and in the bonds of iniquity? Are ye brought to the conviction of this, that ye are yet in the gall of bitterness? I say, if thou

at to this length, to be sensible of thy bonds, and crying out, *O Redeemer hasten and come away*; I say, if thou be sensible of thy bonds and imprisonment, and crying out, *O thou that was answared from eternity to procure liberty to the captives; and the opening of the prison them that are bound*; *O hasten and come away and redeem me*, even poor me; sinking, sinning, perishing self-destroying me; thou art not far from the Great Salvation. 4. Art thou a person who beginneth to weep because thou hast been so long a stranger to Christ, and the Great Salvation? Old men, that are here, how long have ye been strangers to the Great Salvation, and to the Author of it? Now will ye shed one tear for your engagement, and cry out, *Wo is me that Christ and I have been so long asunder*: I say, if thou hast come to this length, thou art not far from the Great Salvation, come away, *O pity yourselves, make hast, make hast, and come away*.

But now in the third place, let me give you some evidences by which ye may know more clearly, whether or no ye have imbraced the Great Salvation; that ye may know your selves, and that ye walk not down to your grave with a lie in your right hand. The first evidence of a person that hath imbraced the Great Salvation, is, that he will have a high esteem of the Saviour and Author of the Great Salvation: Hast thou a high esteem of matchlesse Christ the Saviour of the world? It is a speaking evidence unto thee, thou art a partaker of the Great Salvation: Art thou come this length, that thou cryest out *no-e but Christ, none but Christ*? It is a speaking evidence, that thou art come to be a partaker of the Great Salvation, when thou can cry out that word, *Psalm 124. The Lord is my strength and my song, he is become my Salvation*; if Christ hath become thy Salvation, then it is like he hath become thy Song. I would ask this at you, Were ye ever brought to this length, that ye durst not adventure to praise Christ your alone,

but was forced to sell in all the creature, and to  
 magnify the Lord with us: O that is an evidence that  
 have embraced his Salvation.

Secondly, Those who have embraced the Great Sal-  
 vation, will study to maintain and keep their gifts and  
 they will study to hold fast so precious a Jewel; and  
 preſt, Gal. 1. ver. 1. *Stand fast in the liberty where*  
*Chriſt hath made us free*; yea they will study to walk  
 ſtably in this noble mercy; at leaſt, they will ſtrive  
 to do it, as is alſo preſt, in that ſame verſe  
 ſay, if thou haſt been made a partaker of the Goſpel  
 Salvation, thou wilt ſtrive to keep thy ſelf from the  
 power of theſe things that once triumphed over thee.

Thirdly, A perſon that is a partaker of the Great  
 Salvation, will have a high eſteem of this mercy and  
 ſalvation; ſo Paul, when he ſpeaketh of it here, he can  
 ſpeak ſome parts of excellency to it, calling it the Great  
 Salvation; Therefore, I ſay, if thou haſt embraced  
 Great Salvation, thou wilt have ſo high eſteem of  
 that not to be ſo ſubjected to it as thou ſhould, or  
 in ſubjection to the power of thy luſt in any meaſure  
 will be his burden and affliction. The man will be ſorry  
 when he is brought forth from the houſe of his  
 bondage, unto the Red ſea; he will be ſorry, that when  
 he ſhould have ſongs of triumph over his idols put in  
 his mouth, that they ſhould ſing ſongs of triumph over him.

Fourthly, A perſon that hath embraced the Great  
 Salvation, he will be longing ſometimes for the day when  
 this Salvation ſhall be compleat, when he ſhall ſing  
 ſong with that numerous multitude which cannot be  
 numbered; Rev. 7 verſe 9. O what a day ſhall it be, when he  
 ſhall begin to ſing that ſong: After this, (ſaith he)  
 behold, and ſee a great multitude of all people which  
 cannot be numbered, of all people, nations and languages ſtand-  
 ing before the throne, and before the Lamb; clothed with  
 white robes, and having their heads, and they cryed, And  
 ſay, they ſing, They ſing with a loud voice, They would



And sing, not singly, but cryed with a loud voice: And what did they cry? They cryed with a loud voice, *Salvation unto our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and is the Lamb: I would onely ask at you that are partakers of the Great Salvation, what songs shall be put in thy mouth, when the waters of Jordan shall divide themselves, that the ransomed of the Lord must passe through: and when thou shalt sing that song, Psal. 113. ver. 1. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thee belongs the glory of our Salvation: O what a day shall that be, when that excellent song shall be put in thy mouth? yea, what a day shall that be, when thou shalt be clothed with these excellent garments that are made mention of, Isa. 6. ver. 1. when he shall cloath thee with the garments of Salvation, and shall have covered thee with the robe of righteousness: O what robes are these? Did ye ever see such excellent robes as these must be? I think we will misken our selves: O do ye not think we will misken our selves, when we shall put on these excellent robes? Now therefore, is the bargain closed: Or will ye go away, and not take this Great Salvation? Dare ye go out at the doors, and neglect the Great Salvation? I would bid this at you, Think ye it will not be most sad, that the Devil should tell this in heaven of you to night, I was pitched to a pack of stones, that none of them would touch me: Will ye not be feared that this report shall be carried back to heaven of you? For what report can the Devil carry back but this? Now is the cord of this Great Salvation let down unto you: there none of you that will take a grip of it? O will ye, fight it that it shall ye make this a rejoycing day in heaven, that is a rejoycing day unto you and the way to make it so, is to receive the Great Salvation: Now will I say to you, let me speak to you, and let your thoughts of the Great Salvation, gray hairs should be a Crown of Glory: but in the way of Righteousness, and even so, mark your minds, that young men may not have just*

hid examples. What say ye of this Salvation? Is it not  
 most glorious Salvation, is it not a most excellent Sal-  
 vation that is in your offer? I intreat you speak your  
 minds, tell Christ ye are content to take the Great  
 Salvation, otherwise, who ever he be that will not part  
 of this Gospel Salvation, I in the Name and Authority  
 of Christ our Master, denounce eternal and irrevocable  
 war against him, upon your harness, ye shall not  
 when you put it off again, the wrath and fury of  
 shall come upon thee to the uttermost, if ye imbrace  
 this Great Salvation. Other Wars are but for a time,  
 greatest Captivities that ever the earth did carry, were  
 laid down in the sides of the pit, and their swords  
 under their heads. Armies of ten hundred thousand  
 hundred years time have laid them all in their graves,  
 and ended all their contests, but there is no discharge  
 this war that shall be concluded betwixt Christ  
 and you, it shall become an eternal and most terrible War  
 which shall be but beginning when time is ended: No  
 Peace or War, which of them will ye choise? Dare  
 I send a charge to Christ, and say ye will defy him? I  
 afraid there shall be two things that many of us shall  
 give to day. First, I am afraid there will be many  
 will give Pharaohs report to the offer of the Great  
 Salvation, and say *Who is the Lord that I should obey him?*  
 Tell you who he is, He is glorious in Holinesse, strong  
 in power, doing wonders; O imbrace him before  
 go hence, and give not Pharaohs report, lest ye  
 drowned in the sea of His wrath, whence there  
 be no recovery.

Secondly, I fear there will be many here to day that  
 will give Dannes report in this present offer, I will  
 forsake Christ, and imbrace this present world  
 for an exchange, cursed be he that shall make it  
 will be of Dannes honour? I fear there hath been  
 that honour of a long time, but I intreat you once  
 will before you die. I confesse that proverb, *Old*

## *The Great Salvation*

twice fooler: I think old men that will not embrace  
the Great Salvation, I think ye are simple fooler: What  
will ye for, is there any thing can afford you any comfort  
but this Great Salvation? Now, are ye come  
to see old men, that Christ is waiting for you  
to embrace? I intreat you before ye go hence, speak your  
minds what ye think of the Great Salvation; is it  
not a lovely Salvation? is it not lovely now? What  
say ye to it? I am to go away, and the offer is to be  
taken up at this time, and it is hard to say if ever ye  
shall have an offer again. I would only say this to you,  
be sure of it, though I should never be a partaker  
of this Great Salvation, yet I shall be a witness against  
you that are not partakers of it: I tell and declare unto  
you, I shall be a witness against you, if ye embrace  
not the Great Salvation. Now, old men, are ye  
willing to embrace it? Let me oblige you by the bloody  
mercy of Christ, come and partake of the Great Salvation.  
Now that are travelling upon the borders of eternity,  
Now, if ye will give me no more give this, will ye go  
home and think upon it. I shall not be uncharitable,  
if I enter to judge your thoughts; I fear there shall be  
many declared and found guilty among us, that we  
have declared unto heaven we will not embrace the  
Great Salvation, but have trod the blood of the Son of  
God under foot. Now I intreat you, every one of you,  
ask at your selves if ye be the persons that will give up  
your hearts to do so. Now, I shall leave it with you,  
let it not be a witness against you. I shall leave it  
with this; O come away, old Men, young Men, old  
Women and Maids, come and embrace this precious  
Gospel Salvation. Ye may say, ye had us come; but  
we cannot come. I desire no more of you but to come  
with this, Lord, I am content to come, but I cannot  
come. Come once to that; for if once ye be come  
to receive it, it will not be long before ye be there to  
receive it. Now shall Christ depart, and will leave of  
you

you say, ye are content to take him? Will ye shew  
your own Consciences with this? Am I content  
with Christ and the Great Salvation? O blest, be  
that be He that is the Author of this Great Salvation,  
and that be he that gets any of the ends of the earth  
the Great Salvation, that we sink not under the weight  
and fury of the Lord. Come and imbrace this Great  
Salvation, and again I say, come and imbrace it;  
what can ye have if ye want it? and what can ye want  
if ye have it; I shall say no more, but close with  
much, *Isa. 62. 17.* Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed  
the ends of the world, to those that are far off. What  
he proclaimed? Say ye to the daughter of Sion, behold  
thy Salvation cometh, behold is cometh. I say to you that  
are the ends of the world; Salvation is brought  
unto you; I am brought and far from righteousness,  
Great salvation is brought near unto you, and will ye  
find it away? O consider what you are doing; and  
so that that can persuade you to imbrace the Great  
Salvation, we desire to give praise.



# S E R M O N

Concerning

# D E A T H

*Psal. 89. 48. What man (is he that) liveth  
and shall not see death, See.*

**I**T is very hard to determine, where all that  
here shall be within thirty years; for even  
that time come, many (if not all) of us who  
here shall have taken up our eternal lodging  
And whether we shall take it up in the eternity of

## concerning Death.

163

the eternity of pain, is also hard to digest; but only one thing I am sure of, that all of us shall shortly be gone; *And ere long the shades of death shall be spread upon our eye-lids, and our eye-strings shall begin to tick.* Therefore, I would the more fervently inquire of you, what would ye think if death were approaching this night unto you? Think ye that Jesus Christ is gone up to prepare a place for you? even for you? surely I think we are all near to eternity; and there are some bearing me to day, whom I defy the whole world to assure, that ever they shall hear another Sermon: Therefore, I intreat you all to hear this preaching as if it were the last preaching that ever ye should hear; and O that we could speak it as if it were the last Sermon that ever we would preach unto you. But be ye me, death is another thing then we take it to be; what will many of us do in the day of our visitation, when desolation shall come from far? where will we flee for rest, and where will we leave our glory? Old men, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Old women, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Old men, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Old women, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Young men, where will ye flee when death assaults you? It was an ancient observation of David, Psal. 39. 5. that God had made his days as vanity and breath; which either may relate to the whole life of a man, viz. his infancy, his childhood, his manhood, and his old age: Or it may relate to the four seasons of his life, viz. his morning, his forenoon, his afternoon and his evening, yet all our life time is but a day. And O, think ye not that our day is now almost come?

Now, before that I begin to speak the thing from the words, I shall speak a few things to you, which I conceive, which I conceive, may put a together of our souls.

1. Whether is it lawful for any to desire to live longer than their long and true life? I think not.

Whether it be lawful for one to cry out, *O that I were away* (and all my shadows in them be gone) that long eternity may come?

Ans. I say, it is lawful in some cases for one so to cry out; for it was *Paul's* desire, *Philipp. i. 23*. *I am a strain betwixt two*; having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better. And, *1 Cor. x. 5*. *I groan inwardly*; desiring to be clothed with my garment which is from heaven. I long greatly till the seventh year of my age come; when my minority shall be past; that I may be entered heir to that matchless inheritance. But to clear in what cases it is lawful to desire to die:

1. It is lawful to desire to die, when it floweth from a desire of uninterrupted fellowship and communion with Christ, and conjunction with him: this is clear, *1 Cor. v. 6*. *Knowing that while we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord*. Therefore, *vers. 8*. *We would rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*. Also it is clear, *Philipp. i. 23*. *I am a strain betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better*. It was his greatest desire to have near and unmixed communion with Christ. What aileth you Paul (might one have said) may you be content to stay a while here? Nay, *saith Paul* *I desire to be gone, and to be with Christ*. Wast thou ever with him here Paul? I have been with him, said he, but what is all my being with him here, in comparison of my being with him above? *While I am present in the body, I am but absent from the Lord*. Therefore, I will never be at rest (saith he) get what I will, until I get Christ, until I get them naked and in glory: the imperfections of that noble Plant of renown, the flower of the stalk of Jesse, who is the light of the living house, the eternal admiration of Angels.

2. It is lawful to desire to die, when it floweth from a desire to be nearer to heaven, and from a desire to be

these excellent things that are there, this is cleare  
 1 Cor. 9. 4. *We grow being burdened*, or as the word is,  
*we groan*, as they who are pressed under a heavy burden,  
 as we may be clothed upon, &c. What aileth you re-  
 man so Paul? O saith he, I groan that mortality may  
 be swallowed up of life.

1 I I. It is lawfull to desire to die, when it floweth  
 from a desire to be freed from the body of death: and  
 from these tentations that assault us, and from these op-  
 portunities whereunto we are subject by it. Doubtlesse,  
 Paul desired to die on this account, when he cryed out,  
 Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver  
 me from the body of this death?* He longeth greatly for  
 the day, *Wherein he should be made white like the wings  
 of a dove, covered with silver, whose feathers are of yellow  
 gold.* O saith Paul, I am as one impatient till I be shorn,  
 where I shall be clothed with these excellencies: *white  
 robes, the righteousness of Christ.* Oh, saith Paul, I  
 think every day as a year, till I be possessed of that  
 Kingdom where Sathan cannot tempt, and the flesh  
 cannot yeeld, and where I shall be free from all sin-  
 ning. Now in all these respects, may we desire  
 to die? But in regard all these, I would give you  
 these four Cautions.

1. *Cautiō.* Your desires to die should not be pe-  
 temptory, but ye should desire to die with submission to  
 the will of God, so that although he would fill up  
 ten years more to your life, ye should be content to live  
 ten.

2. *Cautiō.* When your desires are hasty, and not  
 grounded, for some when they meet with an outward  
 trouble (without all deliberation) will cry out, *O that  
 I were dead.* But your desires to die, should  
 be deliberate, but not hasty, or rash.

3. *Cautiō.* It is not lawfull to desire to die, because  
 of personal affliction. Many, when they meet with some  
 affliction, will cry out, *O let me die.* They long for  
 death.



death, I said upon that account, such were Job's desires, Job 10. 11, 12. and chap. 5. ver. 7. 8. O that I might have my request, even that I would please God to destroy me, &c. This desire was very unlawfull.

1. 4. *Caution.* It is not lawfull to desire to die, when a predominant idol is taken away from thee; yet this was *Jonah's* desire, chap. 4. 23. *Jonah* thought his life, and reputation (which was his idol) was gone, and could never be regained: therefore he wished to die. But I would say this to you, that some will have ten desires for death, when they have not one desire for heaven. And what moveth Christians to be so desirous to die? It is not so much because of their hope, as because of their anxiety; it is not so much because of their conscience, as because of their impatience. But I say to you, when your desires of death are not accompanied with desires of heaven, suspect them. 2. I would say this, that there are some who will have ten desires for death, when they will not have one for the death of the body of death; But it were good for thee (who are here) to be desiring the death of the body of death, when thou shouldst thou be in a more suitable frame to desire to die.

3. Some will have hearty desires to die, and when death cometh, they will be as unwilling to die as to live. It hath been observed, that some who have much to do to die, when death cometh, have cryed out, *I have a little time that I may receive strength*, &c. 4. There is a great difference between a desire to die, and death itself. It is an easie thing to desire to die, but it is a very great businesse to meet with death, and to look in the face, when it cometh. We think death (when it come near to us) to be but childrens play, but when we meet with it, it maketh us change our thoughts. For it is a great businesse to die.

*Quest.* 1. Is it lawfull for a Christian to desire to die, when he is summoned to die?

*Ans.* In some cases it is lawfull for a Christian

He is free, even when he is summoned to die; which is clear from the practice of David, Psal. 79. 13. where he saith, *That the Lord would spare him a little.* It is also clear from the practice of good Hezekiah, Isa. 38. when he was commanded to let his house be order, for he should die, and not live, he cryeth forth, *Remember me, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart: and have done, that which is good in thy sight, and Hezekiah wept sore.* Or as the word in the Original, *he wept with great weeping.* But regard this, take these two Cautions.

Cautions 1. Thy desires to live (when thou art summoned to die) should not be peremptory, but with submission to the will of God, that it may be his pleasure to remove thee presently out of time, thou shouldst be content to die.

Cautions 2. Thy desires to live should have gracious principles, and also a very gracious end, as it most clearly appears in David Psal. 79. 13. where he saith, *O Lord, how long shall I may recover my strength, before I go from hence.* He saith no more: his desire to live was not that he might have more victory over his idols, as if he had said, my desire to live is, that I may have strength to overcome them, and overcome my idols: and without all controversy, Hezekiah's desire was a most precious and well-founded desire. However, I would lay this unto thee, that thou shouldst examine thy desires to live, as much as thy desires to die: for we are ready to think of our death if we could but he is that universal King, to whom all of us must be subject ere long.

Now in the words which are read unto you, there are six things which may be clearly observed therein.

I. First, That it is a most clear and infallible truth, that all persons that once see death, shall certainly die.

II. Secondly, That this truth (that we shall all die)

(see death) is not much believed or thought upon by many, therefore it is that the Psalmist doubteth the assertion; *Who is he that liveth and shall not see death, & shall he deliver his soul (that is his life) from the hand (that is from the power) of the grave?*

III. Thirdly, That sometimes a Christian may waver in the solid Faith of this truth, that once he must die, this the Psalmist waxes unto, as it is also clear in the word [who] *Who is he that liveth and shall not see death?*

IV. Fourthly, That the certainty of this, that once we shall die, should be still kept in our minds, therefore that note of attention *Sela*, is put to it, as if it had said, take heed that there is none living that shall not die.

V. Fifthly, That howbeit some persons put the day far away, as if they were not to see death, yet in the day coming when they shall see death, and death shall take them by the hand.

VI. Sixthly, We shall take notice of this from the context, that the Christian who is much in mind of the brevity of his life, will believe the certainty of death, the Psalmist was speaking of the shortness of his life in the preceding verse, and in this verse, speaketh of the certainty of death.

Now, as for the first of these things observed, we know that it is certain and most sure that we must all die. I hope there are none of you here who will deny it, though I confesse few of you believe it; yet said the woman of Tekoa, 2 Sam. 14. *We must all die and we are as water spilt upon the ground, that cannot be gathered up again, neither doth God accept the person of any.* And Job 20. 11. *I know thou wilt bring me to death, and thou shalt appoint a day for all living.* And it is clear, Eccl. 1. *There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the breath, neither hath he any power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war, neither shall we deliver ourselves from those that are given to it; it is a law of*

17. It is appointed unto all men once to die. So most clear that we must die. I remember of one King of Macedonia, who had one substitute for every end, to cry at his Chamber door every morning, *Memento mori, Memento mori, Memento mori*. Remember thou art to die. And it is reported to have been the practice of the Nobles of Greece, and in that wherein their Emperor was crowned, that they presented a Marble stone unto him, and he was enquired in what fashion he would have his Tomb-stone made. Such practices speak forth this unto us, that although we were most destitute of light of the Scriptures, we were very mindful of death. Believe me, death will surprise us before we be aware, for it is most certain that we must die; but there is nothing more uncertain how, and the time when, we shall die. Death will surprise some, as it did Abel, in the open field, Gen. 4. 8. Death will surprise some, as it did him in his parlour, Judg. 3. 21. And death will surprise some, as it did Saul and Jonathan in the fight, 1 Sam. 31.

Now in speaking to this point, I shall first speak unto these advantages which attend those that live within continuall sight of death. Secondly, I shall give you some Considerations to presse you to prepare for death. Thirdly, I shall give you some Directions to help you to prepare for Death: And then we shall proceed unto the second point of doctrine which we derived from the Text, and shall present a few things unto you, and so come unto a close for this time.

First then, we conceive there are three things which attend those who live within the continuall sight of this truth, that they must die.

First, The Faith of approaching death with a most exceeding diligent in duty; this was our fathers duty, Job. 9:4. I must walk in my way, and

him that sent me, while it is day: The night cometh, when no man can work: That is, death is approaching, therefore I must work. It is clear also, 2 Pet. 1. compared with ver. 14. In the 11. v. Peter is exhorting diligent in his duty, and the ground of his exhortation is in the 14. vers. Knowing that shortly I must depart off this tabernacle, &c. Yea, it is even the Epicurean argument, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die; and should not the Christian much more cry out, Let me watch and pray, for to morrow I must die? I say, if the Epicures did make use of this notion to make them vigorous in the pursuit of their pleasures; O how much more should a Christian improve it, for making him vigorous in the pursuit of his duty? Therefore I say unto you, O be diligent, for your night is drawing nigh. O Christians; and expectants of heaven, are ye afraid lest ye be nighted before ye have walked the half of your journey? For if ye be nighted on your journey to heaven, before ye come to the end of your race, there is no retiring place whereunto ye may retire to lodge; therefore, O work, work, work, while it is day; for behold death is approaching and then we all be called to an account.

II. The Faith of approaching death, will make the Christian exceeding active in duty: he will not only be diligent, but also exceeding serious and zealous in the exercise of his duty: This is clear from that notable exhortation, Eccles. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: the reason is, For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest. Wherefore, O be diligent while ye are alive, for ye shall never work any more after ye are dead; and if ye leave but one work undone, there is no doing of it after death. There is no work (saith Solomon) in the grave; therefore, O be diligent.

III. The faith of this Truth, that we must all

will help a Christian to be exceeding mortified  
 the things of a present world. Oh, covetous men  
 and women, would ye shake hands with cold death  
 once every morning, I should defy you to prefer  
 the world so much as ye do. Paul was much in the  
 meditation of his change, which made him, 1 Cor. 4. 18.  
 overlook these things that are temporary, while we  
 are not (saith he) to the things that are seen, which  
 are temporal, but to the things which are unseen, which  
 are eternal, therefore, chap. 5. 1. Knowing that if our  
 earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a  
 building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal  
 and indestructible. Therefore in this we groan, earnestly  
 desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from  
 heaven. What aileth you Paul (might one have said)  
 why ye not take a look of the world (no saith he) I do  
 know that if this earthly house of this tabernacle were  
 dissolved, I have a house with God, not made with hands,  
 eternal in the heavens. That is, I know that ere  
 long, the pins of my tabernacle will be loosed, and it  
 will fall down about my ears, therefore I must look  
 for another dwelling house: And 1 Cor. 7. 12. The  
 things of this world passe away. Therefore saith he, 1 Cor.  
 7. 31. would have you without carefulness, living like to people  
 of the world; And, Phil. 4. 3. Let your moderation be known  
 unto all men, The Lord is at hand. As if he had said  
 death is approaching, and at hand, therefore I must  
 be sober. But I think many of us will be found  
 with our soul hid among the stuff, that is, we will be found  
 among the midst of the pleasures of this passing  
 world. But I say unto thee who are such an one, that  
 death will break the strings of thy harp, and thy  
 music will quickly cease. O but death will make thee  
 have a low esteem of the world. O but he that  
 hath these thoughts of the world is long  
 from it, which he shall have of it at death. Have not the  
 worldlings marches been forced every inch, Gen. 22.

would give ten thousand worlds for Christ? Have some persons (who have had the Manna upon their hearts, and that have made their belly their god) been forsaken for ever at death; *O cursed person that I am, what can I do to be world my god?* Alas that I consented my self with the world. Therefore I lay unto thee who art such an one, *O stay thy pursuit after the world, for death is approaching that will cause all thy worldly comforts vanish.*

IV. When a Christian believeth this truth, that he must die, it will be an exceeding great restraint to keep him from sinning, as is clear, *Job 22. 13.* compare with *ver. 14.* where *Job* reckoning over many good deeds done by himself, saith, *What then shall I do when he riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* As if he had said, *Sirs mistake me not, I am boasting much of my self, for I could not have done otherwise, else what should I do when God riseth up?* How could I answer to God if I had done otherwise? I think it were a notable practice for each of you, when temptations began to assault you, to say, *O temptations what will I answer to God, when he riseth up and reproveth me?* If I should yield unto thee? Likewise, *Eccles. 1. 1.* Where *Solomon*, dissuading young men to pursue after vanity, bringeth this as a reason. *Know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee to judgement;* Therefore I say unto thee, who art often tempted to sin, *Watch and reckoning with God be still in thy sight,* I defy thee then to embrace half so many temptations as now thou dost. I intreat you to answer all your temptations with that word, *What shall I do when he riseth up? And what shall I answer when he visiteth me?*

V. When a Christian liveth within the sight of death, that he shall once see death, it shall make exceeding patient under every cross where with he is afflicted. Such a Christian will hardly meet with death, but he will quiet himself with this, *Death*



me beyond this trouble: this is but a cloud that will quickly passe away. And for this cause did David so comely put up that desire, *Psal. 39. 4. Lord make known my end, and the measure of my dayes*: He was full of the knowledge of his end would put him in a long and patient frame.

II. The sixth advantage is this, The faith of approaching death, will teach the person that hath it, to study for wisdom: This is clear, *Psal. 90. 12. Wherefore putteth up this request, So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*. As if he had said, I will never think my self wise, till I know that piece of Arithmetick, *How to number my dayes*. I would desire every one of you all to think with you every morning when ye rise, now I am a day nearer to eternity then I was before; and at the end of every year, now I am an hour nearer unto eternity then I was ere. I say, think often, yea alwayes thus, I was never near my death as I am now; For, oh! are we not all nearer to eternity to day, then we were yesterday?

III. The seventh advantage attending the faith of approaching death, is this, That it will make a Christian very careful in preparing for death. It is impossible for us to believe really that death is approaching; and not prepare for it. Say what ye will, if ye be not careful preparing for death, ye have not the solide faith of this, that ye shall die. Believe me, it is not every one that thinketh he believeth this truth, that believeth is saved. And O how dreadful is it for an unprepared man to meet with death? He desireth not to die, yet he will give a world for his life, but die must he whether he will or not; for death will not be requested to tarry till when he cometh. And therefore I say unto you, *set your house in order for ye shall die*. And ye men and women, *set your house in order for ye shall die*, and be not as those that say, *we shall not die*, and be not that there are any who can tell when we shall die.

Say, ye shall never get time sold unto you. Alas, I find the most part of persons that die now, death finds them at unawares; for indeed the persons that die among us, when we come to visit them, we may give you a full account of them, for we think they are comprehended under these four sorts.

1. First, when we go to visit some persons on their death-bed, they are like unto *Nabal*, *their heart is dying and sinking (like unto a stone) within them*; they are more affected with death, then if it were a fancy; (and for the great stupidity that hath overtaken many) therefore I intreat you delay not your repentance till death, lest the Lord take away your wit, so that ye cannot repent for your senselessnesse and stupid frame of spirit.

2. A second sort we find in a presumptuous frame, thinking they have had a good hope all their dayes, and will not quit it now; they will go down to the grave with their hope in their right hand; or rather they will go down to the grave *with a lie in their right hand*; they live in a presumptuous frame, and they die in the same delusion. For when we tell them, that by all probability they are going down to hell, they answer, God forbid, I was all my time a very honest man, or woman. But love not that confession, for there are many such honest men and women in hell this day.

3. The third sort we find, having some convictions that they have been playing the fool all their dayes, but we can get them no further: I shall only say to such, go down to the grave with convictions in their hearts, not making use of Christ, is to go down to hell with a candle in their hand to let them see the way: and the greater part that die, die in this manner.

4. Fourthly, There are some whom we find in a righteous frame, trusting upon the Covenant of Works, and their own merits, and trusting by these to go to heaven; yet neglecting the offer of Christs righteousness. But alas, we find not one of a thousand in this way, *desire to be dissolved and be with Christ*, that's his desire.

and scarce do we find any in such a frame, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Therefore I say unto you all who are here, O will ye mind death before it take hold on you. Oh, mind your work now, for ye will find that death shall be work enough for it self, though ye leave no work till then.

VIII. The eight advantage that attendeth the Christian believing this truth, that once he must die, is this, death will not be so terrible to him as it is unto many when it cometh. What (think ye) maketh death a thing of terrors? What maketh many to shake like the leaf of a reed, when they are summoned to appear before Gods Tribunal? It is even because of this, they have not been thinking on death before it came, so as to prepare for it, and I fear many in this place may be feared for death, and that when it cometh to them, they will say unto death, as Job said to *Elijah*, *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* sure death will take you and bring you to the judgement seat of Christ; Therefore study by all means to think often upon it, and make ready for it; for (believe me) death is a very big word, for it will once make you stand with horror in your souls, if your peace be not made with God: I know not a more dreadful disconcert, when death and a guilty conscience meeting together. The second thing that I shall speak unto you is this observation (viz. *That it is a most certain and infallible truth, and all persons shall once see death*) shall be to give you some considerations for pressing you to prepare for death.

I. The first consideration is this, *That to die well and to the Lord, is a most difficult work*; therefore I intreat you to prepare for death. It is a difficult work to command your tongue aright, it is a difficult work to pray aright, and it is a difficult work to converse aright. But I will tell you that it is a more difficult work to die aright, than any of these. It is true, it is more difficult to command your tongue aright, yet it is much more difficult to die aright, than to command your tongue aright. For it is a most difficult

work to die in the Lord. Death will put the most accurate Christian that is here, to a wonderfull search: and therefore I will tell you nine things that death will try in thee. 1. Death will try both the reality and strength of thy faith. It may be easie for thee to keep up Faith under many difficulties, but death shall put thy Faith to the greatest streesse that ever it did meet with. Yea, know this that the Faith of the strongest Believer may get (and ordinarily doth get) a set at death, the like whereof he never got before, therefore prepare for death. 2. Death will try thy love to God, some persons pretend much love to him: but death will propose this question to such a person, *Lovest thou him more then these? Lovest thou him more then thy wife? More then thy house? More then thy friends?* But your unwillingnesse to digge up such much ground to fear that many have little love to Christ, but much to the world, and so do not answer the question, *Lord thou knowest I love thee.* 3. Death will try thine enjoyments, some of you may be ready to think that ye meet with many enjoyments, so that ye might reckon (as you think) to live in enjoyments and sweet out lettings: but beware of death bring them not down to twenty. I have known some, who thought they had met fourey times with God when death came, it made them take down the count to the half, therefore seing death will try the reality of thy enjoyments, O prepare for it. 4. Death will try thy patience. Thou may seem to have much patience now but when death cometh (and thou art put to die) it will put thy patience to a great tryall, therefore prepare for it. 5. Death will try the reality of thy duties, yea of those duties wherein thou had most satisfaction, as communicating aright in such a place, thou hopest that is sure: thy reading the Scripture at such a time thou hopest that is sure: thou prayed at such a place aright, and hopest that is sure: thou meditated in such a place aright, and hopest that is sure. But (believe me) death may make thee change thy thoughts: for thou

Some persons who have communicated and prayed, are as right as any in this generation, who (for all that) will not find six duties wherein they can find satisfaction at death: Therefore our need is great to prepare for it. 6. Death will exceedingly try thy sincerity when it comes: An hypocrite may go all alongs his whole way undiscovered, yet death may bring him to light, and make it appear what man he is. 7. Death will discover unto thee many hid and secret sins, of which thou never had a thought before, yea, albeit thou thought these had been forgotten, death will let thee see them standing between thee and the light of his countenance. 8. Death will accurately try thy Mortification: Some think they have come a great length in Mortification; but (believe me) death will try it and put it to the touch-stone. 9. Death will try thy hope, whether it be real or not. I shall apply by this, that all the other graces must follow Faith in death, and so it is Faith must carry us thorow, being that a triumphing grace, which must sit the field for whom all the other graces will follow and by by. It is Faith that must enter us fairly within the borders of eternity. It is Faith must gain stand all the temptations of death, and all the other graces must (as it were) follow by, and Faith strike the last stroke in this war.

II. The second consideration to presse you to mind death, is this, that ye are to die but once. O labour to do that well, which ye are to do but once, and the wrong doing of which can never be helped. If ye pray not aright, ye may get that mended: if ye meditate not aright, ye may get that mended: and if ye communicate not aright, ye may get that also mended: but alas, if ye die not aright, there is no mending of that: Therefore, O prepare for death, that ye may die well, seeing ye are to die but once.

III. The third consideration to presse you to mind death, is this, That they are pronounced blessed who die in the Lord, Rev. 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.* O let that provoke you to prepare for death, that you may die in the Lord, that is the only way to more

you eternally happy. I confesse it is a question difficult to determine whether it be more difficult to die well, or to live well: I shall not answer it, but rather desire you to study both.

IV. The fourth consideration to presse you to prepare for death, is this, viz. That though thou put all thy work by thy hand before death, yet shalt thou find that death shall have work enough for it self, yea, as much as thou shalt get done. It will then be much for thee to win to patience: it will be much for thee to win to the fight of thy Justification: and it will then be much for thee to win to assurance: O then is it not needful for thee, to put all thy work by thy hand before thy latter end come? Wherefore I may say to you as *Moses* said in his Song, Deut. 32. 19. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.* O that you had this piece of divine wisdom, I pray you consider that sad word, *Lament. 1. 9. She remembereth not her last end,* what of it? *Therefore she came down wonderfully:* So was the down coming of many in this generation be wonderful, who consider not their last end.

V. The fifth Consideration, for pressing you to prepare for death, is this, viz. That their labour shall end, but their works shall not be forgotten, as is clear from the last cited place, *Rev. 14. 13. They rest from their labour, and their work followeth them:* And is not that a glorious advantage?

VI. The sixth consideration to presse you to prepare for death, is this, viz. That death may come upon you ere ye be awar: ye know not but death may surpris you at night, before you go home to your houses: & therefore I thus presse you to study a constant preparation for death.

VII. The seventh Consideration to presse you to prepare for death, is this, viz. That as death leaveth you with judgement find you. If death shall leave you strangers to Christ, ye shall appear before his judgement as strangers unto him: Therefore I intreat you all to be ready for it. I think that noble saying of *Paul* can

ing worthy of imitation, 1 Cor. 15. 3. I die daily, which (I think) doth comprehend these three things. 1. That Paul had death alwayes in his sight. 2. It comprehendeth this, that he endeavoured to keep such a frame, as that every moment he should be ready to die, so that whensoever death should put the summons in his hand, he should be content to answer. 3. It comprehendeth this, that he laboured to lay aside and remove all things out of the way, that might detain him from laying down his tabernacle. O saith Paul, I labour so to clear my self of all hinderances, as that when ever I shall be summoned to remove out of time, I may willingly lay down my life. Thus Paul desired alwayes to have his latter will clear. Therefore I would ask you this question, say, when did you make your last testament? I think it were suitable for us to be renewing our latter will every day; for in so doing, Paul made an excellent testament, the better of which, none that died since have made, 1 Tim. 4. 8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; These are very sweet articles, and then he addeth, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: And think ye not that very sweet? And he would leave some thing unto you in Christ's name, viz. And not for me only, but for all them that want for appearance. Now I come to the third thing, which I would say. To give you some directions for helping you to prepare for death.

Direct. 1. I intreat you, be much in preparation for death every day, for it is even a preparation for heaven, by taking a sight of your grave and latter end every day.

Direct. 2. I intreat you, be much in these duties. First, In Self examination, that your conscience may be clear unto God: for many a ragged compt will we have, when death and we shall meet. Secondly, Be much in the exercise of Repentance, that so ye may have every fault of corruption in you mourned for, before death shall come upon you. Thirdly, Be much in the exercise of Faith, making you



*calling and election sure.* Fourthly, Be much in the exercise of Mortification, and that will help you to keep loose grip, not onely of the world, but also of your other idols; And if ye be much in these, ye shall undoubtedly be prepared for death.

*Direct. 3.* Be much in minding the excellent things of heaven. A Christian that would be prepared for death, would have all his thoughts and conversation there, I think, it would be an excellent help (in preparation for death) to take a sight of the Crown every day.

*Direct. 4.* Labour always to keep a good conscience void of offence towards God and men: I say, labour to keep the conscience clear, and that shall be a continual feast unto thee.

*Direct. 5.* Slight not thy known duty, do not crucify any conviction, neither break any resolution; put these three together, and that will exceedingly help you to prepare for death: I say, see that ye adventure not to slight any known duty, see that ye adventure not to crucify any conviction, and see that ye adventure not to break your resolutions.

Now we come to the second thing which we observe from the words, *viz.* That this truth, that we shall one day die, is not much believed by many of us. And to make this appear, we shall only give some Evidences unto you, to prove that we are not as yet prepared for death.

I. *Evidence.* Doth not the unspeakable stupidity that hath overtaken many, say, that we are not a people prepared for death? Alas, many of us would find our selves in a most stupid temper if we were presently to die; for many of us are no more moved with the threatnings and terrors of God, then if they did not belong unto us, and this faith we are not prepared for death.

II. *Evidence.* That we are not prepared for death, is also appearing so much after the vain and passing delights of a present world. Many of us *Rise up early and get us to bed at night, and eateth the bread of sorrow all the day, and weeping themselves with their clay.* And I am sure

That such a person (being night and day taken up with the world) is not prepared for death. I remember a man recorded of such a wretched one, who was exceedingly rich, said he, I would give so many thousands of money, if death would give me but one day; yet he got it not. And O how suddenly will death surprize many of us as it did him?

III. *Evidence*, which speaketh forth our unpreparedness for death, is our impatience under every petty cross, that we meet with, for the prepared Christian will be patient under very sharp crosses.

IV. *Evidence*, That we are not prepared, is our not endeavouring to live within sight of our interest in God. Oh, if we were prepared for death, durst we live in so much uncertainty of our interest in God, and of our assurance of heaven?

V. *Evidence*, Some of us can let our idols ly in our breast six years without repentance, and will never study to mortifie them, nor to repent for them; and surely such are not prepared for death.

Now, I intreat you seriously to consider what hath been said. And that ye may the more seriously think upon it, I will tell you some material challenges that your consciences at death will present unto you, therefore take heed, that ye may know how ye will answer.

I. *Challenge*, Is the fighting of much precious time, and sinning away the precious offers of Grace. O what will ye answer to that Challenge, when death shall present it to you? Death will say (or rather thine own conscience at death) what siled thee to sin away so many hours, without either Praying, Reading, or Meditating? How have ye any thing to answer when death shall present this challenge to you? I intreat you prevent death, by preventing it first seriously to your selves.

II. *Challenge* that death will present unto you, will be the killing of many precious convictions which we have had. What will each of you answer at death when

your conscience propoſeth this challenge to you? Thou met with ſuch a challenge at ſuch a time and went home and crucified it, when at another time thou met with another challenge, and went home and crucified it. Theſe challenges will be laid home to thy door, therefore think on them.

III. *Challenge*, Death will charge you for a formal hypocrITICAL way of going about duties: I ſay your Conſcience will then tell you, that ye went to ſuch a Communion with a ſelfiſh end: and at another time ye prayed hypocritically and formally: and what will ye have to ſay when ye meet with theſe challenges? I confeſſe I know not what ye can answer to theſe; but I charge you, be thinking what ye will answer, for it may be that theſe convictions ſhall ly on your conſciences, that even this day ye have heard two ſearching Sermons, and ye met with ſome convictions, but made no good uſe of them: yea, and it may be ye did ſleep all the time: what will ye answer, when it will be ſaid to you, ye went to ſuch a Sermon and ſlept all the time: and ye went to ſuch a Communion, but had no other end before your eyes but to be ſeen of men? I intreat you conſider preſently what ye will answer to theſe.

IV. *Challenge*, Will be for your breſking of many precious reſolutions. It will be ſaid to ſome of you, thou ſaidſt at the Communion in this place, ye took on vows, and did break them? I am ſure ye cannot queſtion the juſtice of this challenge: therefore ſee what ye will answer.

V. *Challenge*, Ye ſlighted many precious offers of the Goſpel: O men and women in this city, what will ye answer to this? I was often exhorted to take Chriſt, and yet would never take him: What will conſcience ſay to that, when death ſhall rable it before you? I tell you what ye muſt then answer, O curſed I, that ever reſuſed Chriſt in the Goſpel, and ye ſhall then be convinced becauſe this is your ſin. Believe me, there was never a ſinner of this everlaſting Goſpel, and of Chriſt made uſe to you, that ſhall not at death be ſet before

brought to your remembrance; and O how sad will it be to you, when Christ shall open the book where your sins are written, and begin with the sin of neglecting the Great Salvation? Thus I invited you when you were twelve years old, and ye would not come; I invited you when ye were thirty years old, and you would not come; I invited you when sixty years old, and ye would not come: What will ye answer to this? Have ye any thing to say? Or must ye not stand speechless before your Judge, when he shall put home this challenge unto you; therefore think seriously, upon it, how ye will answer to it.

**VI. Challenge.** will be for your sinning oftentimes against Light, and O how sad and painful a challenge will that be at the day of death, when it will be said, thou sinned with a wilfulness in thy bosom that thou wast doing wrong: thy Conscience will say, oftentimes did I tell thee this is sinful; yet wouldest thou not abstain from it: And what will ye answer from this?

**VII. Challenge.** Oftentimes ye sinned upon very small temptations, and what will ye answer to that? Must ye not then confess it, and say, O how often have I deserted Christ and embraced my idols upon a small temptation? Now, I desire you be thinking what ye will answer to these even small material challenges, which certainly shall be presented at the day of death. I assure you, ye must either answer all your challenges in Christ, else ye will not get them well answered. Therefore I would exhort you to embrace the Gospel and Christ in it, that so let death propose never so many challenges unto you, ye may answer them all as David did, viz. *God hath made with me an everlasting Covenant* (and that will answer all your challenges) *though my house be not so with God, yet I have the everlasting Covenant so build my salvation upon*.

Now, to press you to make use of Christ, I shall give you these four Considerations.

**Consideration 1.** If ye embrace not Christ now, death will be very unpleasant to you. O what else can comfort thee, when going through the region of the shadow of death but this, *I am Christ's*? Is there any other thing can comfort thee in that day but only this, *I am Christ's*, and he is mine.

**Consideration 2.** If ye embrace not Christ and the Great Salvation now, it will be a hundred to one if ever ye be able to do it, when ye are going to die. For sinners cannot lay their cloings with Christ till death, yet God will not be so merciful to a hundred getteth favour to grip Christ to death, therefore look on it, for ye will not get your mind to embrace it, when ye are going to die. Therefore come at ye, I beseech you, and embrace the Great Salvation.

*Confession 3.* If ye delay your closing with Christ, till death shall upon you, ye shall never be able to make up that loss. *For will the dead rise and praise God? Or shall any come from the land of forgetfulness, to take hold upon a crucified Saviour?* Therefore, O will ye take him for your Salvation.

*Confession 4.* If ye will take Christ now, he shall be your Guide, when ye are going through the valley and shadow of death. And O how blessed is the person that can sing that word, *Psalm 43. 24. This is my God, he will be my guide even unto death.* If ye can sing that pleasant song, O how may ye be comforted, when your eye strings shall begin to break? O how happy is he who can say, *Though I walk through the shadow of death, I will fear no ill: for I have said, the Lord is with me. Now this is the acceptable day, and the year of salvation, therefore do not delay, but embrace Christ, lest death surprise you ere ye be aware, and so the acceptable day be lost.* But unto them who think they may delay till death, I say, surely there are many damned atheists in hell that (sometime) did think as ye think: *I will make it wronge right when death and I shall come.* I hope that three dayes repentance will satisfie for all my wronge; for I am sure there are many in hell who did not get three dayes to think upon their former wronge. Therefore, O come, come, and embrace Christ presently. Now are ye all perswaded of this truth, that ye shall once see death? Then study a tender walking, for (believe me) there are many of us who shall go thorow death with many bruised bones, because of an tender walking before God. We know it is not the multitude of words can perswade you to embrace Christ, for many of you never minded the thing: but (believe me) death will preach these things to you in a more terrible manner then we can do at this time. Therefore I say to each of you, O pursue on after Christ; for if death find you in an estranged estate from God, I defy the Angels in Heaven to free you out of that estate. And the day is coming wherein thou shalt say, *O Light of the Great Salvation that I am, I would give all the worlds for one Sermon again that I have heard, wherein Christ was freely offered to me; when thou shalt be tormented without hope of remedy; Therefore, while it is a day, haste on your Redeemer, for your late wishes shall not be granted (which is all one) if ye make not haste.* O therefore, *Haste, haste, and come out from the land of your captivity, and from the land of your bondage, and take Christ for your Redeemer, the Guide of your youth and old age.* Now unto him who can lead you thorow all these steps beguile you and bewitch you, be asunder praise. Amen.

